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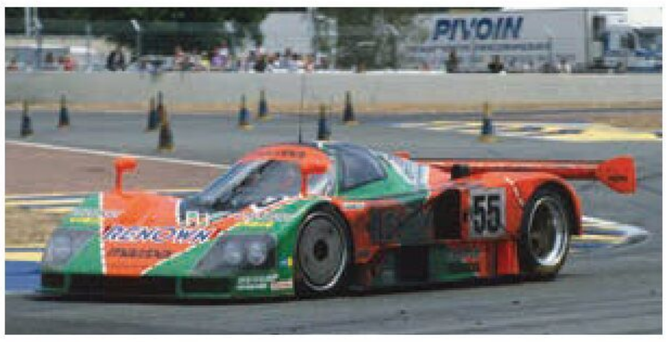
1991

AYRTON SENNA GRABS A MAJESTIC WORLD HAT-TRICK FOR McLAREN

The Brazilian is peerless for his final drivers' championship win in Formula 1



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Ayrton Senna took his second Formula 1 title in succession for McLaren

A year of transition: 1991

Look back at 1991 and you could see how the motorsport landscape was changing. In each discipline addressed in this 1991 Motorsport Moments, there was movement, from Formula 1 to National Hot Rod racing.

In Formula 1, Ayrton Senna powered to his final World crown but behind him there was the increasing threat of Williams. Study 1992, as we shall this time next year, and you can pinpoint to 1991 as the start of the Williams team's success streak. If '92 was the year when Williams came good, 1991 was the season in which Adrian Newey's ideas took shape and were honed. Results improved as the year wore on and reliability came with it.

You could argue that 1991 was a year in which Formula 1 changed as a whole as well. Michael Schumacher's arrival changed the face of the sport and a number of the minnows waved goodbye to the F1 dream, never to race at that level again.

In sportscar racing, the Group C blueprint was being replaced by a 3.5-litre manufacturer category but it wouldn't survive. Entries fell, purists didn't like the format and the writing was on the wall for a class that had been so successful for close to a decade. And yet, amid the gloom, there was a Rising Sun as a Japanese manufacturer won Le Mans for the first time.

In rallying, Colin McRae was rising in stature and would be a World champion before long. In 1991, he was reshaping the British scene, leaving the old guard of dad Jimmy and Russell Brookes in his wake. Touring car racing was splitting its regulations, but the start of the ultra-successful two-litre regulations was a hit in the UK and other nations would soon follow. Sad events also meant that 1991 would reshape the Oulton Park circuit too.

And in National Hot Rod racing, the ubiquitous Toyota Starlet would win its last World final before the pinnacle of short oval racing fell to Vauxhalls and Peugeots.

History suggests 1991 was a pivotal year. Read all about it and enjoy more Motorsport Memories.

David Addison
Editor-in-chief
Motorsport Moments

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SCHUMACHER
MAKES HIS MARK OFF-TRACK IN A TEMPESTUOUS DEBUT SEASON

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Olivier Grouillard escaped pre-qualifying four times in a season spent at Fondmetal and then AGS (above)

Naoki Hattori was one of those saddled with the hopeless Coloni C4

Lehto and Pirro were stand-outs

chronically underfunded and outdated C4 chassis. Chaves was the unlucky incumbent for the majority of the season and not once did the Portuguese racer make it into practice. Consider, too, that the start of the campaign included a leg in America and Brazil, and even when patience was running thin at the end of the year, the Italian team had to head to Japan and Australia.

MN's F1 reporter David Tremayne pulled no punches in his end-of-season review.

"There seems little point in dignifying the Coloni effort by writing anything about it," he slammed.

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The Finn's march to the WRC crown. By Nick Garton

UK RALLYING IN 1991

STAR GAZING

British rally fans were treated to the birth of a rallying star in 1991. Colin McRae, with Derek Ringer sat alongside, hit the British stages in style. **Nick Garton** recalls the season

'McRae took first blood comfortably on gravel'

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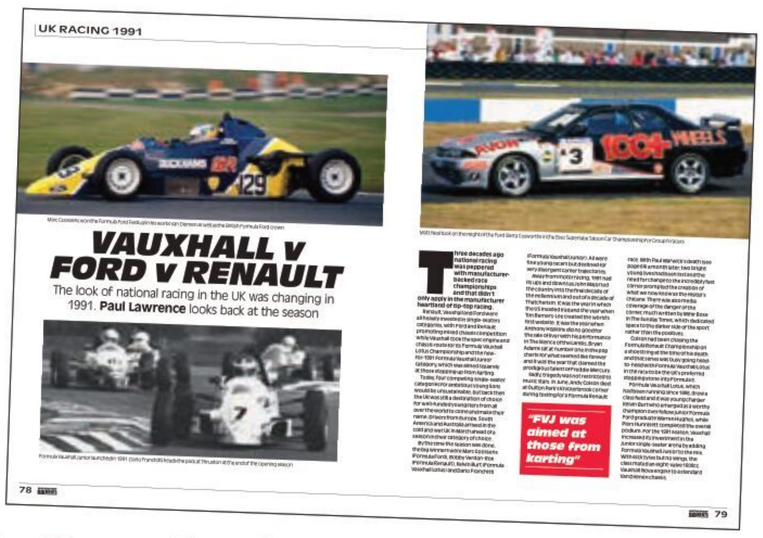
UK RACING 1991

VAUXHALL v FORD v RENAULT

The look of national racing in the UK was changing in 1991. **Paul Lawrence** looks back at the season

"FVJ was aimed at those from karting"

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National racing was changing but still delivered plenty of variety for the fans, as Paul Lawrence recalls

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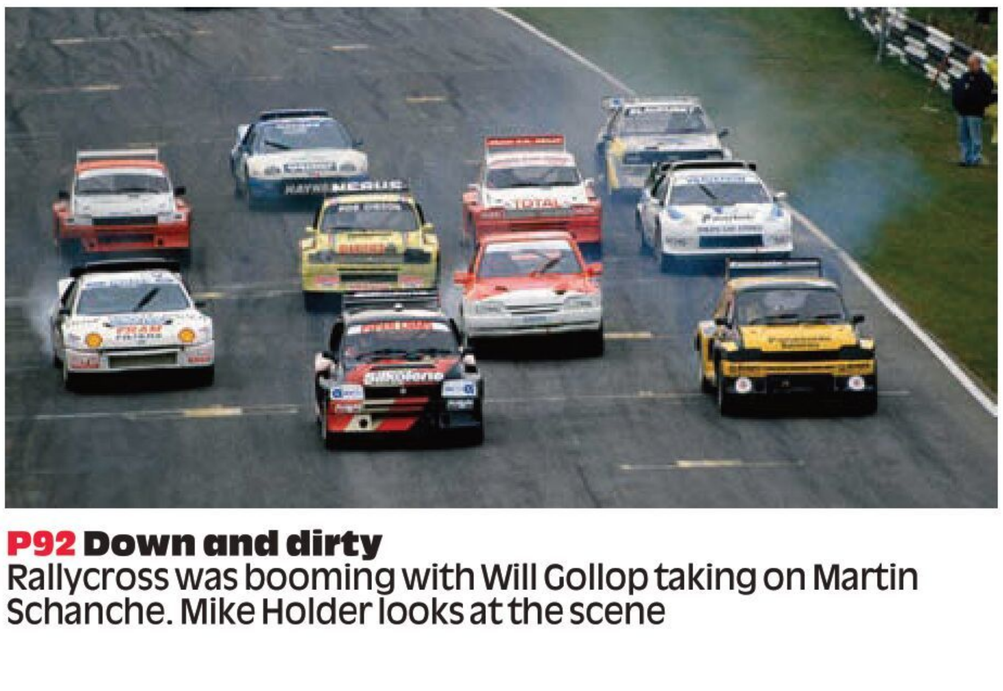
Manufacturers saw the merits of one-make racing as Robin Bradford remembers some of the stand-out categories



P92 Down and dirty
Rallycross was booming with Will Gollop taking on Martin Schanche. Mike Holder looks at the scene

OVAL RACING

NEVER A DULL MOMENT ON THE OVALS

In a year that featured one of the most popular National Hot Rod World Final wins ever, perhaps the most dramatic finish of all time to the BriSCA F1 main event, and the start of an unprecedented dominance in Formula 2, there was plenty to talk about for oval racing fans in 1991. **Graham Brown** relives the events of 30 years ago

"It was the last World title for a Starlet"

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Oval racing delivered thrills. Graham Brown watched the action

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Back-to-back champ Senna spent much of the year with Mansell in his mirror

HOW SENNA AND MANSELL PUT THE RACING BACK INTO FORMULA 1

McLaren's Brazilian star took the crown, but the competition was fierce. By **Matt James**

Formula 1's reputation – along with a Ferrari and a McLaren in the Turn 1 gravel trap at Suzuka – lay in tatters at the end of 1990.

Ayrton Senna's laser-focused determination to get one over on his nemesis Alain Prost had led to the penultimate round showdown where the Brazilian's McLaren had aimed squarely at Prost's Ferrari as the pair headed for a somewhat inevitable collision in Japan.

What F1 needed in 1991 was a good, clean, gloves-off battle for supremacy over the 16 races and it truly delivered. Senna was again a key player as he took the Honda-powered McLaren to a rampant seven race wins on the way to back-to-back titles while Williams was returning to a strong level of competition to prove the major thorn in his side.

After some seasons in the wilderness and without a proper front-line driver, the British team re-employed Nigel Mansell for 1991 after the Brummie had spent two seasons at Ferrari. Along with that, the brainpower of Adrian Newey devised the all-singing, all-dancing Williams FW14 and it was a formidable combination. The Renault motor had the grunt to take on the Japanese giant Honda, which had introduced a V12 for 1991. A lip-smacking prospect was in store for the season, which started at Phoenix, Arizona on March 10.

Before the start of the campaign, Senna had voiced his concern that the V12 motor was no match for the previous V10. This seemed like it was misguided when the Sao Paulo racer went on a four-race winning streak at the start of the season.

After Phoenix, he wrapped up wins at Brazil, Imola and Monaco to push himself to a whopping 29-point lead in the chase for the World title. But, as Motoring News's editor and Formula 1 reporter at the time David Tremayne wrote, all was not plain sailing for the boys from Woking.

"After that opening salvo, McLaren was no longer top dog," he said. "Some teams might have crumbled under the barrage from [Williams at] Didcot but Ron Dennis and co kept commendably cool heads."

That was remarkable given the ace up Williams' sleeve.

While McLaren had failed to make its semi-automatic gearbox raceworthy, Mansell and team-mate Riccardo Patrese had all the latest gizmos on the FW14. It was that advanced technology which caused the stumbling start to the season for Mansell but once it was working, boy did it prove its worth.

Mansell went on a three-race winning run in the middle of the season by claiming French, British and German Grands Prix victories. By the time the teams left Hockenheim in late July, (the ninth of the 16 rounds), the gap between the top two in the standings was down to just eight points.

But this is where, as Tremayne pointed out, Senna's team kept its cool. Although it was generally regarded that Williams had overtaken McLaren at this point in terms of a competitive chassis, there was still life in the title battle.

MN wrote: "Worse still [for McLaren] was a spate of fuel shortages hurt Senna, particularly at Magny-Cours, Silverstone and Hockenheim. The manner in which Honda responded by producing a radically modified version of the RA121E [engine] within 31 days, in time for Senna to win in Hungary and keep his title aspirations very much alive, was probably the technical high spot of the year."

Allied to that, McLaren worked hard at shedding weight from the MP4/6 and partner Shell got involved too to help with fuel efficiency. It was a true team effort to stem the tide from Williams.

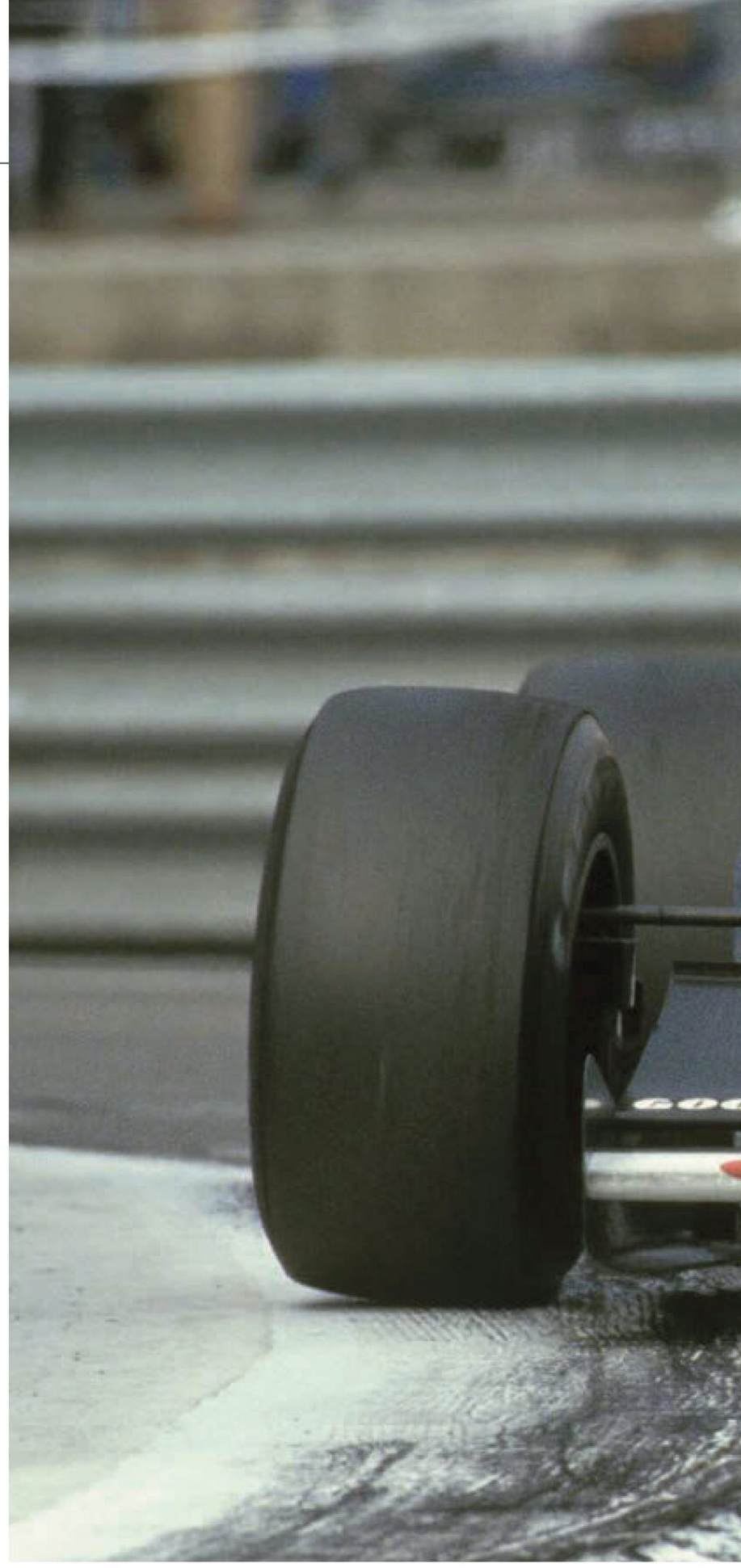
But Motoring News also spotted a change from McLaren's lead driver in the Woking team's efforts to win back the championship it had become accustomed to winning in the recent past. "In 1991, Senna emerged as a driver better able to accept that winning was not always possible in certain situations, and he became more rounded as a result," said Tremayne. "Without doubt, he remains the fastest and most complete driver within the business. It is quite within the realm of possibility that he will at least equal [Juan Manuel] Fangio's tally of championships before he leaves the game."

Allied to the hard work that went on in the background, there were other speedbumps for Senna and McLaren to get over. There was a mid-season injury that meant Senna faced a different kind of challenge in 1991.

He had suffered a jetski accident in the middle of the campaign – just before the Mexican Grand Prix, when he also inverted his McLaren in the build-up to the race. The injury was more significant than was let on at the time. Senna had stitches in his head and the effect would not have been short-term. Also, his pre-season worries about McLaren's ultimate level of competitiveness – although dismissed as folly at the start of the campaign – proved to be correct. Far from being the dominant and sublime Senna that most onlookers were used to, this was Senna fighting at his hardest.

Mansell did get back into his stride, though. Second to Senna in Hungary and a win at Monza in the latter part of the year showed that the chassis-driver combination was not going to roll over, but there were races where the points went begging.

The original Jordan Grand Prix line up of de Cesaris (l) and Gachot (r)



Let's deal with the elephant in the room first: the Canadian Grand Prix, where Mansell was destined to prevail until a last-lap failure at the hairpin allowed Nelson Piquet through to win for Benetton. It was reported at the time that Mansell had accidentally knocked the ignition off while waving to acknowledge the cheers of the crown. This isn't true. What he'd done is let the revs drop so low that the engine stalled.

There were two torpedoes to Mansell's campaign that were the death knell for his attack. The first was a failure when the Magneti Marelli ignition component stopped working in Belgium, and the second was finger trouble at a pitstop meant a wheel detached and the British racer was left stranded in the fast lane of the pitlane in Portugal – something which ultimately led to his disqualification. There were also brake troubles that Mansell had made public over the latter

Mansell went on a charge once the technical gremlins had been put to bed on the Williams FW14

Schumacher joined Benetton late in the season

"Senna accepted winning was not always going to be possible"

Senna claimed the World title at Japanese GP

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The Irishman tackles the posers from the Motorsport News readers p20

Mexican holds his nerve on the streets of Baku to pick up the pieces as title chasers face disaster

PEREZ SURVIVES THE CHAOS TO OPEN HIS RED BULL VICTORY ACCOUNT

azerbaijan

Perez took second F1 win

Hamilton locks up and loses potential podium

By Matt James

Azerbaijan Grand Prix winner Sergio Perez feared that his Red Bull-Honda would fail on the final lap of the restarted race as an hydraulic problem struck his Honda-powered car.

The Mexican inherited the lead when team-mate Max Verstappen, who had led the event from lap 18 and was steering a course to victory, suffered a tyre failure, which pitched him into the wall.

Perez fended off Lewis Hamilton during a two-lap restart dash to the flag as the Mercedes man slithered off the circuit at Turn 1. Hamilton recovered to 15th.

Perez said he was fearful that his machine would have ground to a halt before the end.

"We were close to retiring the car, but luckily we managed to finish the race. And really, it was quite difficult all the way until the end," said the relieved winner.

Red Bull boss Christian Horner added: "We were really concerned that the car wouldn't get to the end of the race, which is why he stopped after the chequered flag.

"You thought that we could only lose when they got the restart, but thankfully it all worked out tremendously well, and Sergio did a great, great job."

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OGIER CONSOLIDATES WRC LEAD WITH WIN

Champion stretches his WRC lead in Sardinia p28

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John Christie's new Lotus position p14

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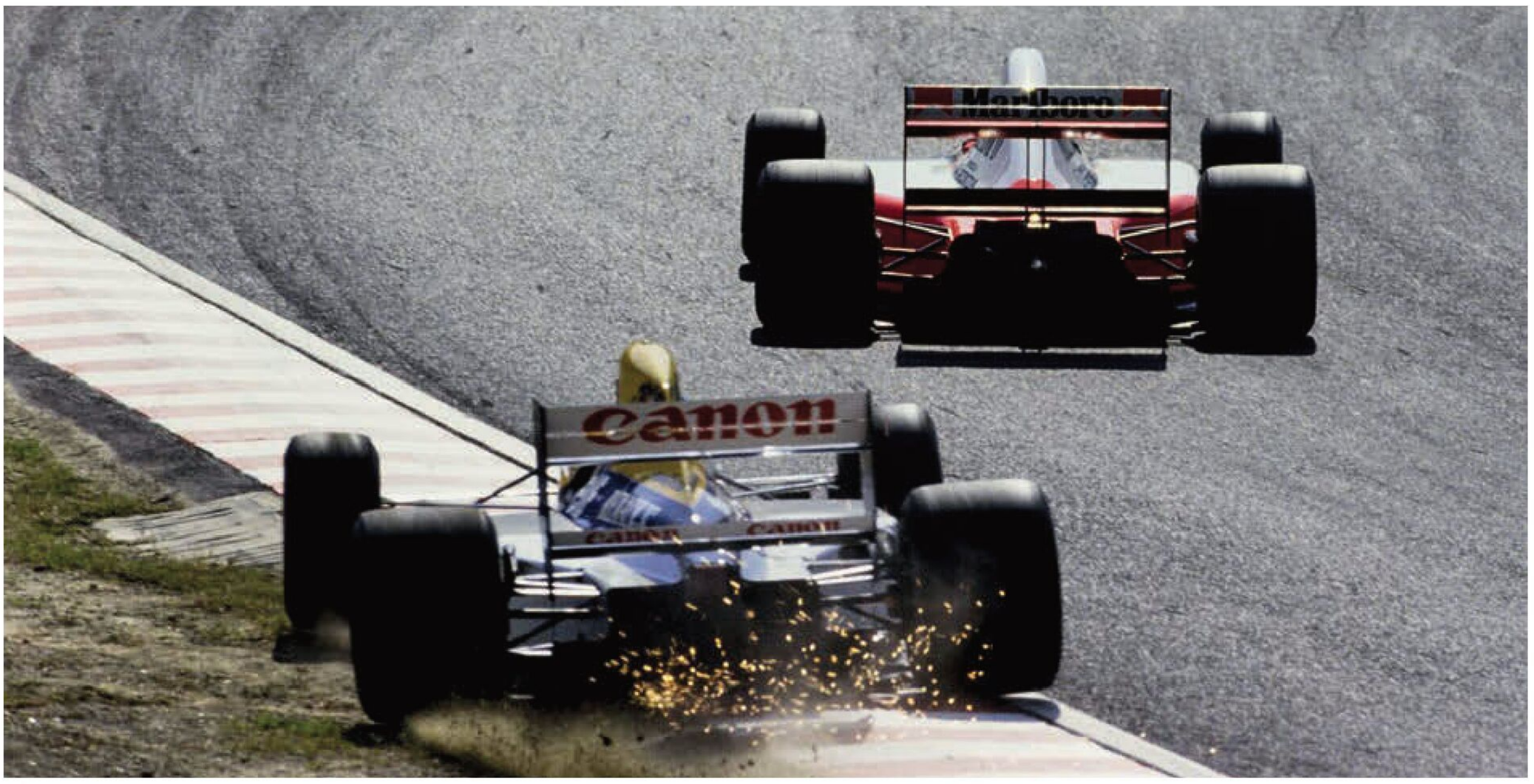


Mansell's bid for a maiden World title came apart with a brake-problem induced shunt in Japan

part of the campaign – which had an impact on him spinning out of the Japanese Grand Prix and ceding the World title.

"Perhaps 1992 will be the year to reward his towering commitment," mused Tremayne.

While the big battle was between Senna and Mansell, which held the headlines, the next most competitive men in the World drivers' fight were their two team-mates, who were often called upon to play the team role to be proper threats themselves.

Williams' Patrese finished third in the points while McLaren's Gerhard Berger was fourth. Patrese took two wins – one in Mexico and another in Portugal, where Mansell's charge as blunted by the pitstop blunder. Berger's sole victory came at Suzuka. With Senna wrapping up the crown in Japan with Mansell out of the picture, the McLaren pitwall decided on a formation finish and the Austrian was able to lead home his team-mate.

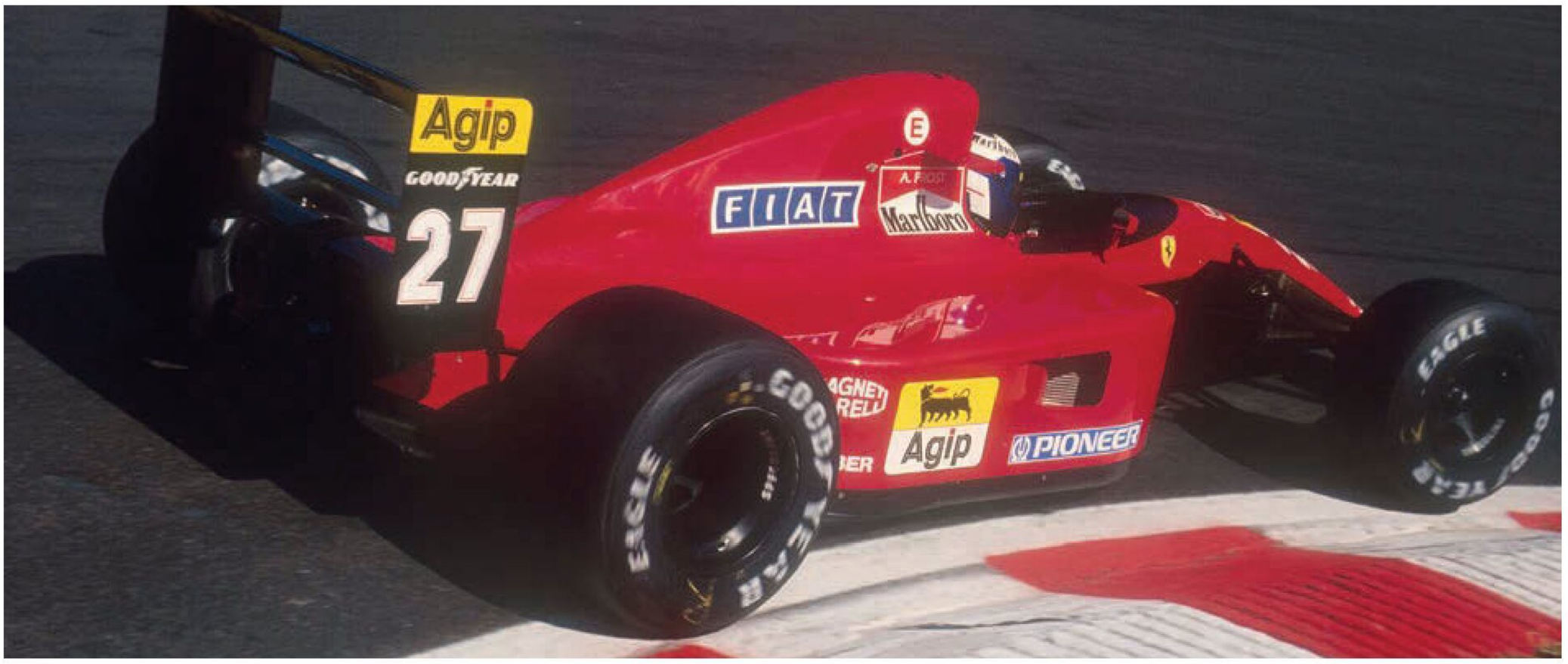
There was a major name missing from the title fight. After coming so close to the World crown in 1990, Prost – partnered with Jean Alesi at Ferrari – was earmarked as one of the pre-season favourites but the campaign was full of disappointments. It got so bad that Prost was dropped before the end of the campaign and was replaced by Gianni Morbidelli for the final race in Australia.

Certainly MN's Tremayne had pointed at the Scuderia as a threat, but it never materialised. "Not since 1973 or perhaps 1980 has the Prancing Horse had such a lamentable year," he wrote. "Letting a driver of Prost's calibre go was nothing short of folly.

"It was difficult to believe that this was the team that had come so close to the 1990 titles and the abiding problems were internal wrangles and sheer politicking. Aerodynamicist Henri Durand had moved to McLaren and designer Enrique Scalabroni left before the middle of the year after disputes over working practices and an argument with Prost. The latter was also in dispute with

"Maybe 1992 will reward Nigel Mansell's commitment"

Number twos: Patrese leads Berger in Portugal



There was no end of intra-team anguish at Scuderia Ferrari which led to Prost labelling the car "a truck"

team manager Cesare Fiorio, who went the same way as the Argentinian after Canada."

With that revolving door in the background, the issues with the car seemed to be shrouded. But it was tough to handle over the bumps and the redesigned 642 – the 643 iteration reworked by Jean-Claude Migeot with a raised nose – didn't prove to be the solution that the drivers wanted. Suspension and aero problems – plus poor throttle response – made its season a dire one.

Prost managed to finish in fifth place in the points and had two second-placed finishes to his credit. Alesi's run to seventh place in the World championship was punctuated by three top-three finishes, including an impressive run at Monaco.

The only other winning driver during the 1991 campaign was Piquet, who inherited the victory when Mansell made his faux pas in Montreal. The John Barnard-designed Ford-powered Benetton 190B and the subsequent 191 were fitted with Pirelli tyres. As one of the few teams running the Italian rubber, Benetton was first with all the latest developments on the covers, but Pirelli simply didn't have the data-gathering ability to match the leading teams. There was a glimpse of the 191's potential when it tested on Goodyears at the end of the year – it was a case of what might have been.

There were grumbles over the power of the Ford HB engine that had undergone six upgrades across the year. The discontent at the Witney factory meant that Barnard was shown the door.

However, perhaps the biggest move for the team towards the end of the year was to sign rising German starlet Michael Schumacher, who was poached from Jordan after just one race. He replaced Roberto Moreno – who had been accused of being unfit but did enough to finish in 10th spot in the hunt for the drivers' crown – for the last five races, scoring a fifth place in the first of them.

Tremayne said that the arrival of Schumacher pointed to a strong future for Benetton. "There was no question that the arrival of the German shook things up and was the best tonic for the team," said MN. "Right from the start, his performances were on a different plane to Piquet's and Moreno's, and in [the third from last race] Spanish Grand Prix, he was pushing Mansell and Berger for all he was worth.

"Next year, with Schumacher and Martin Brundle, Benetton has two very hungry drivers and could finally be set to push into the Big Three."

The story of the season, aside from the titanic struggle between Senna and Mansell, was the performance of the Jordan Grand Prix team. Despite a revolving door of five drivers across the year for a number of reasons – including Bertrand Gachot being jailed for an assault on a London taxi driver – the Silverstone-based concern managed to finish fifth in the constructors' points. It was a remarkable achievement.

At the end of the year, MN wrote: "Some doubted Jordan's ability to match deed and achievement with his winter blarney, but Gary Anderson's 191 was a beautiful car that, although conventional, had some very clever aspects."

Jordan decided on a quixotic blend of trusted Goodyear tyres and a Ford engine that was only one step behind the powerplants that were being used by 'factory' team Benetton. Journeyman Andrea de Cesaris – the full-time occupant of the main car – took ninth in the World championship table as a result.

Including the veteran Italian driver, none of the elements were outstanding in their own right, but the cocktail allowed the squad to rip up the formbook. Tremayne wrote: "[Eddie Jordan]'s team ended the year looking as if it

"Schuey was a real tonic for Formula 1"

Nelson Piquet was in the twilight of his career but managed to inherit a final victory at the Canadian GP

had been in the category for 10 years."

The following season, when the team switched to Yamaha engines, probably felt like a decade. At the end of 1991, Jordan also announced that it had also signed Stefano Modena from Tyrrell.

Modena's run to eighth in the 1991 World title chase had been achieved at the wheel of a Honda V10-powered Tyrrell 020. The Braun-backed car featured the anhedral front wing first pioneered by the squad in 1990 and George Ryton worked on the uprated design with Harvey Postlethwaite.

The season started strongly with a fourth and fifth place for Modena and team-mate Satoru Nakajima in Arizona, but it all fell apart after that. There were flashes of pace from Modena – including running second to Senna at Monaco before the engine broke and he inherited a lucky second in the Canadian Grand Prix.

The transverse gearbox in the car meant it didn't have the superb weight distribution of its predecessor and it was another team saddled with the unfavourable Pirelli tyres. Postlethwaite left the team before the season's end too, and it was all falling apart for Uncle Ken. There were some serious question marks over the future of the team. The Honda deal ended at the finish of the 1991 campaign and that was allied to what MN said was Nakajima's "imminent and overdue retirement from Formula 1."

Those scrapping around for the odd point across the year made up

The big-name teams sinking to the bottom

Championship winners Lotus and Brabham's fortunes were seriously on the wane in the 1991 season, and the writing was on the wall for both operations.

Lotus had an ace up its sleeve by signing McLaren protege Mika Hakkinen for the season but there were musical chairs in the second seat which was shared between Julian Bailey, Johnny Herbert and Michael Bartels. The 102B chassis was powered by a Judd engine and, despite only scoring three points over the season, just getting the programme onto the circuit had been an achievement to be proud of.

MN wrote at the end of the year: "Right up until the close of 1990 there was public doubt that the great team would survive its devastating season, but behind the scenes former team manager Peter Collins and the father of ground effect and active suspension Peter Wright were working their hearts out to revive it. For the good of the sport they succeeded and went on to have a season that had deemed to be a complete success. It was a year in which Hethel's dynamic duo showed just how far and F1 team can get on sheer guts, determination and commitment, allied to some sound management and engineering."

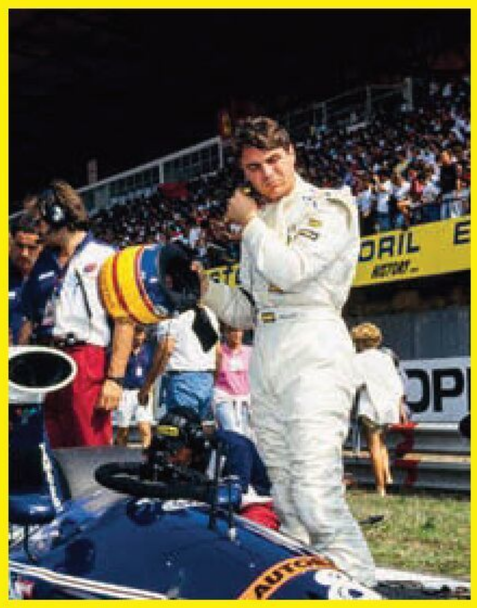
Brabham, meanwhile, had the talented driving line-up of Martin Brundle and Mark Blundell at the wheel of its Yamaha-powered BT59Y and subsequently the BT60Y. The previous year for Brabham, with Judd engines,had yielded just two points, and in 1991 it had a new engine, the Yamaha V12 OX-99. The compact unit was more reliable than its predecessor. Brundle scored two points and Blundell one, but there were some ominous signs for the Chessington squad.

Financial constraints meant that some of the workforce was not getting paid on time, and parts on the car were going beyond their normal lifing allowance which led to some frightening accidents for the two Britons.

"It was not a year for nervous drivers to inherit the Brabham cockpits," wrote MN.

Just one year later, Brahbam's journey in F1 was at an end.

The Lotus team was kept alive



Blundell scored one point

Brundle proved to be brave

The season was a tough one for Pierluigi Martini with transmission trouble for the Minardi-Ferrari team

JJ Lehto was the star for Scuderia Italia hinting at his latent ability

MN thought that Nakajima's retirement from F1 was "long overdue"

the bottom of the top 10 in the constructors' championship – which was entered by a remarkable 18 teams throughout the 1991 season.

The fans' favourite underdog, Minardi, was best of the also-rans. The Italian team maintained its faith in Pierluigi Martini and paired him with Morbidelli (until the latter was promoted to Ferrari and was replaced with Moreno). The M191 chassis, which would run on Goodyear tyres, was mated to a Ferrari V12 powerplant, which was a cause for optimism.

However, a lack of funds meant that the Aldo Costa-designed car was not able to build on the strong foundations the team had laid down and a persistent clutch problem, which led to transmission damage. That meant that Martini, who finished 11th in the drivers' standings, was regularly left nursing the car to the chequered flag. When it did work properly, Martini flew and scored a fourth place at Imola and again in Portugal. Those were his only points-paying finishes.

The only other podium finisher was JJ Lehto in the Pirelli-shod Scuderia Italia Dallara, which he drove alongside team-mate Emanuele Pirro.

Lehto's day of days, after a major pre-season testing accident, came at Imola in a wet-dry race where he took the right choices at the right time to follow Senna and Berger over the line in the Nigel Couperthwaite-designed neat machine. Lehto could have added a fourth spot to that tally too at the Canadian Grand Prix until the Judd V10 engine failed.

Morbidelli was a Ferrari stand-in at Adelaide

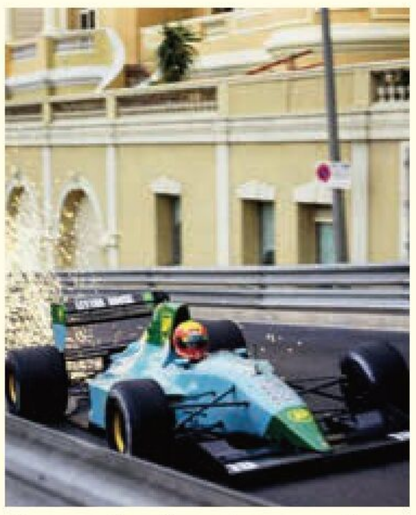
Modena suffered a frustrating season in the Tyrrell

POINTS

Formula 1 World Championship 1991

POS	DRIVER	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	TOTAL
1	Ayrton Senna	McLaren	**10**	**10**	**10**	**10**	-	4	4	3	-	**10**	**10**	6	6	2	6	**5**	96
2	Nigel Mansell	Williams	-	-	-	6	1	6	**10**	**10**	**10**	6	-	**10**	DQ	**10**	-	3	72
3	Riccardo Patrese	Williams	-	6	-	-	4	**10**	2	-	6	4	2	1	**10**	4	4	1	53
4	Gerhard Berger	McLaren	-	4	6	-	-	-	-	6	3	3	6	3	-	-	**10**	2	43
5	Alain Prost	Ferrari	6	3	NS	2	-	-	6	4	-	-	-	4	-	6	3		34
6	Nelson Piquet	Benetton	4	2	-	-	**10**	-	-	2	-	-	4	1	2	-	-	1.5	26.5
7	Jean Alesi	Ferrari	-	1	-	4	-	-	3	-	4	2	-	-	4	3	-	-	21
8	Stefano Modena	Tyrrell	3	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	10
9	Andrea de Cesaris	Jordan	NPQ	-	-	-	3	3	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
10	Roberto Moreno	Benetton/Jordan/Minardi	-	-	-	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	3	-	-			-	8
11	Pierluigi Martini	Minardi	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	6
12	JJ Lehto	Scuderia Italia	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
13=	Bertrand Gachot	Jordan/Larrousse	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	-						-	4
13=	Michael Schumacher	Jordan/Benetton											-	2	1	1	-	-	4
15=	Saturu Nakakjima	Tyrrell	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2

Other scorers: 15= Mika Hakkinen (Lotus) 2; 15= Martin Brundle (Brabham) 2; 18= Emanuele Pirro (Scuderia Italia) 1; 18= Mark Blundell (Brabham) 1; 18= Ivan Capelli (Leyton House) 1; 18= Eric Bernard (Larrousse) 1; 18= Aguri Suzuki (Larrousse) 1; 18= Julian Bailey (Lotus) 1; 24 Gianni Morbidelli (Minardi/Ferrari) 0.5. **Non-scoring:** Mauricio Gugelmin (Leyton House); Thrierry Boutsen (Ligier); Johnny Herbert (Lotus); Nicola Larini (Modena); Erik Comas (Ligier); Gabriele Tarquini (AGS); Alex Zanardi (Jordan); Eric van der Poele (Modena); Alex Caffi (Footwork); Olivier Grouillard (Fondemetal/AGS); Michele Alboreto (Footwork); Karl Wendlinger (Leyton House); Stefan Johansson (AGS/Footwork); Fabrizio Barbazza (AGS); Michael Bartels (Lotus); Pedro Chaves (Coloni); Naoki Hattori (Coloni). DQ = disqualified; NPQ = failed to pre-qualify



Gugelmin struggled with Leyton House

POINTS

Constructors' Championship 1991

POS	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	TOTAL
1	McLaren	10	14	16	10	-	4	4	9	3	13	16	9	6	2	16	7	139
2	Williams	-	6	-	6	5	16	12	10	16	10	2	10	10	14	4	4	125
3	Ferrari	6	4	-	6	-	-	9	4	4	2	-	4	4	9	3	0.5	55.5
4	Benetton	4	2	-	3	10	2	-	2	-	-	7	3	3	1	-	1.5	38.5
5	Jordan	-	-	-	-	5	3	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
6	Tyrrell	5	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	12
7	Minardi	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	6
8	Scuderia Italia	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
9	Lotus	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
10	Brabham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	3

11 Larrousse 2; 12 Leyton House 1. **Non-scoring teams:** Ligier; Modena; AGS; Fondmetal; Footwork-Ford; Footwork-Porsche; Coloni.

CALENDAR

Formula 1, 1991

RND	DATE	RACE	VENUE	WINNER (CAR)
1	March 10	United States Grand Prix	Phoenix	Ayrton Senna (McLaren)
2	March 24	Brazilian Grand Prix	Interlagos	Ayrton Senna (McLaren)
3	April 28	San Marino Grand Prix	Imola	Ayrton Senna (McLaren)
4	May 12	Monaco Grand Prix	Monte Carlo	Ayrton Senna (McLaren)
5	June 2	Canadian Grand Prix	Montreal	Nelson Piquet (Benetton)
6	June 16	Mexican Grand Prix	Mexico City	Riccardo Patrese (Williams)
7	July 7	French Grand Prix	Magny-Cours	Nigel Mansell (Williams)
8	July 14	British Grand Prix	Silverstone	Nigel Mansell (Williams)
9	July 28	German Grand Prix	Hockenheim	Nigel Mansell (Williams)
10	August 11	Hungarian Grand Prix	Hungaroring	Ayrton Senna (McLaren)
11	August 25	Belgian Grand Prix	Spa	Ayrton Senna (McLaren)
12	September 8	Italian Grand Prix	Monza	Nigel Mansell (Williams)
13	September 22	Portguese Grand Prix	Estoril	Riccardo Patrese (Williams)
14	September 29	Spanish Grand Prix	Barcelona	Nigel Mansell (Williams)
15	October 20	Japanese Grand Prix	Suzuka	Gerhard Berger (McLaren)
16	November 3	Australian Grand Prix	Adelaide	Ayrton Senna (McLaren)*

** = shortened race, half-points awarded*

Alboreto manhandled Footwork

Lesser-spotted Pedro Chaves

BIG PICTURE

Senna walks on water to sign off title-winning year

The final Formula 1 race of the season took place on a sodden Adelaide track and was stopped early, meaning half points were awarded. It only managed 14 laps, which is a long way to go for less than 25% of a grand prix. Predictably, in the wet, Ayrton Senna was king. He qualified on pole from McLaren-Honda team-mate Gerhard Berger. He went on to walk on water but gesticulated furiously to get the race stopped. That happened on lap 17 but the results were taken back to lap 14. Ironically, that helped Senna's great 1991 rival Nigel Mansell, who had already spun his Williams out of second place but was reinstated on countback.

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WILLIAMS FW14:

WILLIAMS GETS BACK TO THE FRONT BY HARNESSING ELECTRONICS

The FW14 was the first Williams that had the input of Adrian Newey, and a shone a light on a high-tech era that grand prix racing was about to embrace. By **Matt James**

Adrian Newey's first design for Williams was about to open the door on high-tech cars

The Williams FW14 might have lost the constructors' championship by 14 points to McLaren in 1991, but the gizmo-laden machine, penned by Adrian Newey, was the forefather of what would be a title-winning flourish just 12 months later.

Newey had joined Williams from the Leyton House March team in 1990, and immediately set about penning the FW14.

It was, up until that point, the most technologically advanced machine to have graced the grand prix grid. Newey, who had his wings clipped with the limited resources available to him from his former employer, was able to think outside the box.

The new semi-automatic transmission system did cause some reliability dramas over the opening races. It had been a brave decision by Williams, Newey and Patrick Head to give the green light to a system that had not been tested before the start of the campaign.

Star driver Nigel Mansell, who was partnered by Riccardo Patrese, failed to finish any of the opening three races while bitter rival Ayrton Senna claimed a hat-trick. For the 1991 season, dropped scores had been axed too, which meant those lost early points were more painful than

Mansell cemented his place as the darling of the British fans with a dominant victory in the British Grand Prix at Silverstone in July

Who has power? Mansell and Senna's famous Spanish stand-off

A brake problem meant Mansell skittered off track in Japan

they had been in the years before. Eventually, Mansell ceded the crown by running into the gravel at Suzuka.

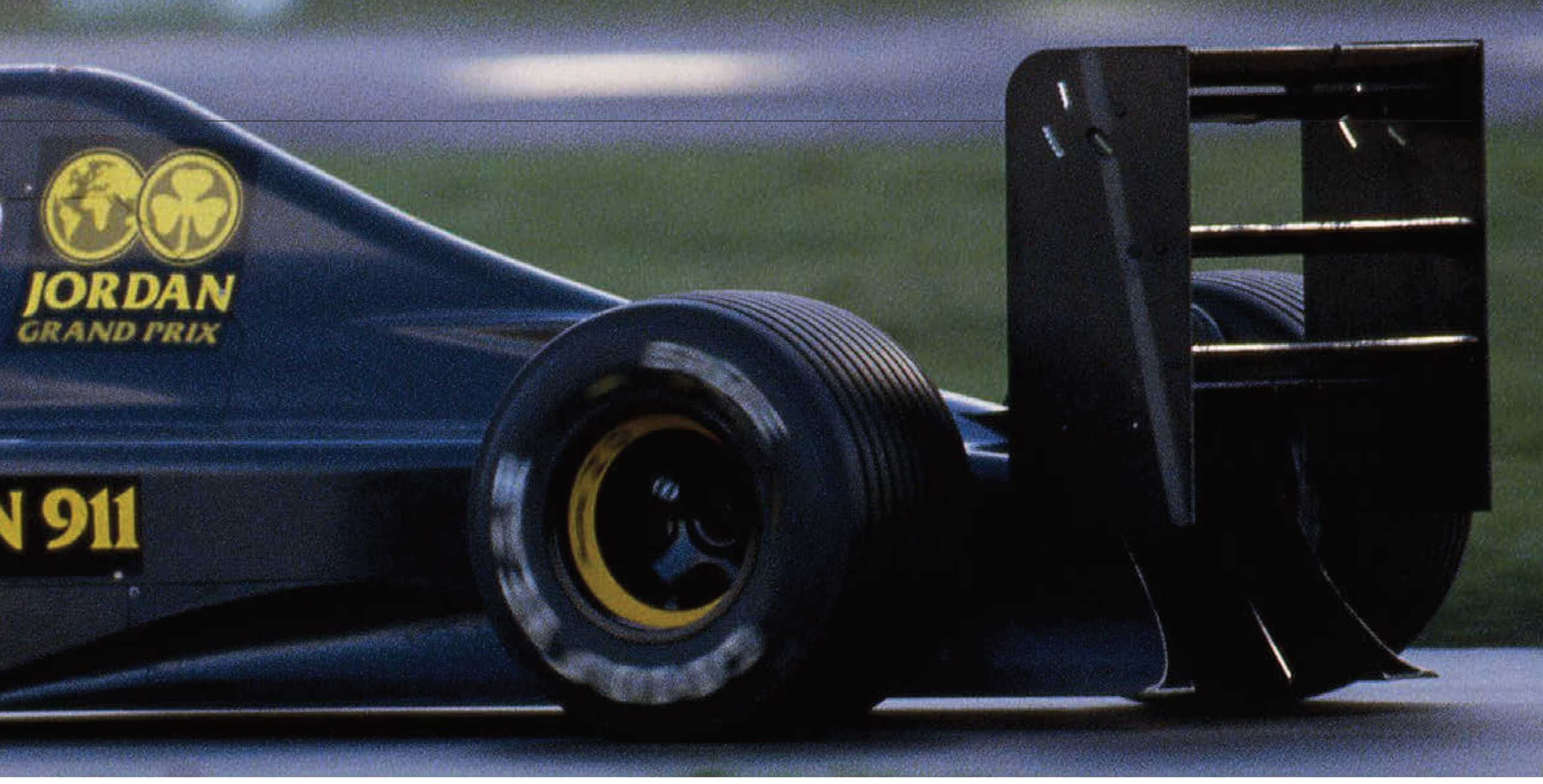
Motoring News explained: "The FW14 harnessed the best ideas of the indefatigable Head and new signing Adrian Newey, the man who had introduced the raised nose to the Leyton House 881.

"With Head's no-nonsense approach curbing the wide excesses of Newey's imagination, the package proved devastatingly effective. It generated very high levels of grip with minimal drag and putting Renault's undoubted power down very effectively. If the car did have an Achilles Heel – the semi-automatic transmission aside – was the brakes.

"At Hockenheim and Hungary in particular the drivers complained of long brake pedals (not to be confused with the short pedals that one national newspaper suggest should be fitted to the car), but Mansell's comments about the brake problems in Suzuka was taken with a pinch of salt by some team insiders. Ever innovative, Williams used solid carbon discs for qualifying at Magny-Cours, a circuit where heat dissipation proved to be less important. It was typical of Head's innovative approach."

But the growing pains that the team went through would give it the platform for Mansell to reach the top of the world in the FW14B, complete with anti-lock brakes and active suspension. "There is no doubt that the team can launch an even more effective campaign in 1992," said MN.

THE PLUCK OF THE IRISH



SHAKES UP FORMULA 1

Matt James looks at the spectacular – and against-the-odds – birth of Jordan Grand Prix

The story of the Jordan Grand Prix team, particularly in the plucky first season in the top flight in 1991, was one to warm the heart.

It was the underdog headed up by the ebullient and flamboyant team boss Eddie Jordan. Eddie had more than served his apprenticeship in the lower formulae. After winning in Formula 3000 with Jean Alesi in 1989 and having launched the careers of drivers such as Martin Donnelly and Johnny Herbert, Jordan had his sights set high.

It took him a while to co-opt fellow Irishman Gary Anderson into the dream he shared but he eventually did in 1990. The wheels were set in motion for what would ultimately become one of the prettiest-looking Formula 1 cars of all time, the 911 (although the type number was later altered to the 191 after some complaints from Porsche…).

Anderson knew his brief and he knew that there wasn't too much money to pay for any fancy ideas. With 17 other teams entering grand prix racing in 1991, he also knew that his first F1 chassis had to be something that inspired confidence in the drivers to allow them to go out and push for that one-lap pace that they would need to see them beyond the 30-minute pre-qualifying session on Friday morning.

As MN described at the time, the chassis that Anderson came up with eventually wasn't ground-breaking. It didn't push any boundaries, but it stayed well with in convention. For a team that was desperate to prove itself, the tried and trusted conventions were just the way to go.

Anderson remembers that the initial steps weren't all about the glitz and glamour that is associated with the top flight. He says: "There was supposed to be an office all ready for us, but when I got there, there was nothing, so the first couple of weeks were spent building an office and ordering drawing boards, catalogues, all the stuff you need."

Anderson was responsible for the look of the car, which included aerodynamics, while Andrew Green took on the suspension, steering and brakes, and Mark Smith handled the driveline, including the engine installation.

A chance meeting in the sadly missed Royal Oak in Silverstone village helped open doors at Cosworth, and so the original plan to use a Judd V8 was shelved and the tiny team pressed ahead with its ambition.

Each week as the 1991 season loomed, Anderson was still unsure that the project would ever see the light of day. "In the back of my own head, I never thought we would get to a car with four wheels on it," he says. "Eddie was probably the same but every month, we'd get further and further, him with the

"Anderson had a clear vision on the design"

Jordan backed up a strong performance in Canada with another competitive showing in the Mexican Grand Prix, remembers Anderson

money and us with the car."

The car was first revealed at Silverstone in November 1990. What was perceived to be a meagre gathering of under-impressed journalists was actually more than the number of people in the Jordan team at the time.

In his autobiography, Eddie Jordan noted: "Even allowing for my obvious bias, I thought we had created one of the most elegant cars of the moment."

John Watson shook the car down and recalled the day for Motorsport News: "I drove it at Silverstone and my reaction, after seven years out of F1, was that it was a very sweet car. You get an instant feeling as you drive down the pitlane and my reaction was that it was one of the sweetest cars I'd ever driven. It was well balanced, well built, had good aero and, with Gary Anderson's expertise, ticked every box."

Going into the 1991 Formula 1 season, 18 teams had entered a total of 34 cars, so the dreaded hour of pre-qualifying on Friday morning was a requirement for new entrants Jordan and Modena, plus for Dallara, Fondmetal and Coloni. Anderson recalls just making it to pre-qualifying at the opener in Arizona was a success.

"At that time, we had 28 people in the team, and took 27 of them to the opening grand prix of the season at Phoenix," he says. "Eddie's wife Marie and my wife Jenny did the catering, and I had my 40th birthday cake on the Saturday, after qualifying."

The team had an unlikely ace up its sleeve in the experienced Andrea de Cesaris, who had been a sparring partner with Eddie Jordan in the junior formulae, and whose understated diligence helped the team to dial the car into each track. Anderson quickly realised that the Italian's experience would be vital.

"Over all his racing years, Andrea had kept a book on everything, the characteristics of the circuits, whether they ran the car soft, or with lots of downforce, even which way the wind blew," says Anderson. "He had a catalogue of that, like a Haynes manual."

De Cesaris – otherwise known as de Crasheris – was more sanguine in the twilight years of his F1 career and his finishing record was a strong one. The first points came at the Canadian Grand Prix and not only did de Cesaris finish just one place off the podium, his team-mate Bertrand Gachot followed him across the line for a fifth-placed finish.

The double score meant that the

"I think we created an elegant F1 car"

Proud father: Gary Anderson ,in the background, keeps an eye on his maiden design as Bertrand Gachot gets ready to take to the track

Silverstone team was now well on its way. The next race after Canada in early June was in Mexico, and it provided another stand-out memory for Anderson.

"One race where I thought, we're really racing here, was at Mexico, at the Peraltada, seeing Andrea come through," he recalls. "The running order went Williams, Williams, McLaren, Benetton and then a Jordan. It made me think actually, we're hanging in there, it's not like we're slow, it's a racing car doing a good job."

He also remembers a test session at Paul Ricard: "[Ferrari driver and team boss] Alain Prost and Cesare Fiorio were stood at the front of the garage and Alain said, 'How can they be doing this?' We had nothing, you know, toolboxes from Halfords painted green, but the times said we were fastest."

The international media's spotlight was firmed turned on to the 7-Up-backed cars when Michael Schumacher made his (albeit brief)

Building on the experience: Eddie Jordan, Andrea de Cesaris and designer Gary Anderson

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Italian Alex Zanardi was a stand-in driver for Jordan at the Japanese Grand Prix, one of five men to actually race the 191 in 1991

The tiny Jordan Grand Prix team practises pitstops ahead of its debut in the US Grand Prix

race debut at Spa and then was subsequently poached by Benetton in a furore that put grand prix racing – and Eddie Jordan's fledgling team – firmly on the front pages, let alone the sports ones.

But, by that stage, people already knew about the Jordan Grand Prix team and it was turning into a heavy hitter. A return of 13 points across five points paying finishes in the 16 races was more than any onlooker would have predicted possible.

In its maiden Formula 1 season outscoring a grandee team like Tyrrell was the stuff of dreams – but there were some tough times in the background as Jordan was struggling to pay his bills from Cosworth, and one of the seven 191s that were built ended up at Cosworth's HQ.

Despite that drama, those first-year dreams looked like they would be carried even further when wheeler-dealer Jordan brokered a deal to run works Yamaha engines for 1992. Maybe Jordan's fast-talking had gone just a bit too fast... MJ

SENNA WINS HIS TOUGHEST WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Matt James recalls how the Brazilian fended off the might of Williams

By the time of the fifth round of the 1991 Formula 1 battle, Ayrton Senna was easily 29 points ahead of his rivals in his bid to retain the drivers' title. It looked like it would a simple walk in the park for the Brazilian.

But those weren't the noises coming from the driver himself. He was concerned that Honda's new V12 motor was not in the same ballpark as the powerful Renaults in the back of the Williams FW14s of Nigel Mansell and Riccardo Patrese.

No-one took Senna seriously. In the opening round of the year in Phoenix, the McLaren man qualified more than a second clear of the opposition and was able to pit from the lead without ceding first place. That qualifying advantage had been trimmed to just 0.5s by the time the cars got to Interlagos for round two and Senna had a fight on his hands to hold off both Mansell and his team-mate Patrese. Indeed, the McLaren was barely 2.9s clear of the Italian by the end of the race. The physical effort of battling so hard for the 71 laps – plus a gearbox problem which meant he lost the third and fifth cogs – meant Senna was unable to extract himself from the cockpit of the MP4/6 when it finally came to a rest.

To the winner, the spoils: Ayrton Senna's seven race wins took him to the title glory

> **"Senna fought a rearguard action"**

Wet weather mastery gave Senna a more comfortable time of things in the third round at Imola where he headed home team-mate Gerhard Berger.

The came Monaco, a place where Senna had reigned supreme on three other occasions and he made no mistake in 1991 either – despite his team ordering to race for one more lap than he needed to as they had mistakenly miscounted the 78-tour event. Mansell was nearly 20s in arrears but clocked his first marks of the season.

As if to prove Senna's point that the McLaren was losing the power battle to Williams, the King of Qualifying would only be able to register another four poles through the remaining 12 races, something he found hard to swallow.

The tide had turned. Williams began to harness its reliability and by the time the F1 pack reached Canada, the Didcot team locked out the front row of the grid. While Senna was struck by

The McLaren MP4/6 was upgraded as the season went on and it proved enough for Senna and the team to back-to-back drivers' crowns

Dominating Monaco was something Senna was accustomed to

A bounce-back win in Hungary kick-started Senna's title run-in

Senna ran out of juice on the last lap at Silverstone

an alternator failure, Mansell was imperious on his way to glory until he let the revs on his engine drop too low and the car stalled, handing the win to Benetton's Nelson Piquet.

To add insult to Williams' injury, the FW14 fired up perfectly well when it was returned to the pits, and the gearbox was working just fine…

On the power tracks in the middle of the year, Senna was fighting a rearguard action. Mansell went on the rampage in France, at Silverstone and in Germany. Senna went on a five-race run with only two podiums to show for it.

When Honda's boffins in Japan came up with a new, more fuel-efficient powerplant for August, the McLaren bandwagon was rolling again. A win in Hungary was crucial, but perhaps the biggest turning of the tide was the Belgian Grand Prix at Spa. This was a track that was supposed to play into the hands of the aero-efficient Williams and its powerful motor. Despite Senna annexing pole, he was soon staring at the back of Mansell's machine as the Englishman disappeared up the road. An electrical problem stopped the Williams on lap 22 and the advantage was back with the Brazilian.

Senna would not win again until the title had been done and dusted in Japan. Mansell was the stronger performer and the evidence of the Williams' superiority was brought into sharp focus in the Spanish Grand Prix, the anti-penultimate event of the schedule. The sight of Mansell and Senna going wheel-to-wheel down the main straight is etched into the minds of all who witnessed it, and the Williams man prevailed.

That win in Spain was a late-season highlight for Mansell though. Being disqualified for a botched pitstop in Portugal and then running off the road at Suzuka gave Senna the back-to-back titles he had craved.

SCHUMACHER
MAKES HIS MARK OFF-TRACK IN A TEMPESTUOUS DEBUT SEASON

Matt James looks at the fallout when the young German stepped into grand prix racing

Michael Schumacher secured a dream switch to Benetton and completed the season alongside veteran Nelson Piquet

It was, perhaps, McLaren boss Ron Dennis who summed up the situation perfectly when ruminating on the tug-of-love between the Jordan Grand Prix team and Benetton over the services of young hopeful Michael Schumacher. "Welcome to the Piranha Club," observed Dennis.

Schumacher had been the rising star of the Mercedes factory sportscar team. The 1990 Macau F3 Grand Prix winner was part of Merc's young driver programme but was yet to win an endurance round when his Formula 1 chance came.

Eddie Jordan's fledgling team had been left in the lurch when regular driver Bertrand Gachot was arrested following an altercation with a London taxi driver. It meant the Belgian racer would not be able to contest his home grand prix at Spa, and Jordan settled on Schumacher a stand-in.

That was all fine and a contract was drawn up between Schumacher, his management and the team boss that was due to be rubber stamped on the Monday after the race in the Ardennes.

The German worked miracles at the

Clandestine meetings sorted the deal

wheel of the Gary Anderson-designed 191 and qualified in seventh place, which was probably the worst thing that could have happened for Jordan. Although his performance in the race only lasted a few hundred yards until the clutch broke, it put the other teams on high alert. Could this driver really be the next big thing?

The-then Benetton boss Tom Walkinshaw certainly thought so. With a close eye on the sportscar arena himself with his ties to the Jaguar programme, he knew he had to act quickly.

He did, and by the time of the Italian

Jordan couldn't hold on to his starlet

Grand Prix just two weeks after the race at Spa, Schumacher was kitted out in yellow and partnering Nelson Piquet for Walkinshaw's squad.

There was plenty of brinksmanship involved as Jordan tried desperately to keep hold of his new prized asset – which he knew would be bankrolled (to a degree) by Mercedes. Amid the maelstrom of speculation and counter rumour, the truth was hard to unearth and the battle over Schumacher's destiny was only settled a matter of minutes before the opening free practice session at Monza.

Firstly, Schumacher's team of his

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advisor Jochen Neerpasch and manager Willi Weber presented Jordan with a new contract for the driver, which changed the terms and conditions under which Schumacher would race for the team. Sports marketing and management agency IMG got involved too. The goalposts were moving rapidly for Jordan and it became clear that the driver's team and IMG had another contract dangling in front of them.

The Irishman went to court to prevent Schumacher driving for any other team in the Italian Grand Prix, believing he had a binding letter from the driver and his management. Roberto Moreno, the man who would be ousted by any potential move to slot Schumacher into the Benetton seat, also went legal.

In the end, F1 boss Bernie Ecclestone had to get involved at 0230hrs on the Thursday leading up to the race at Monza to try to placate all parties.

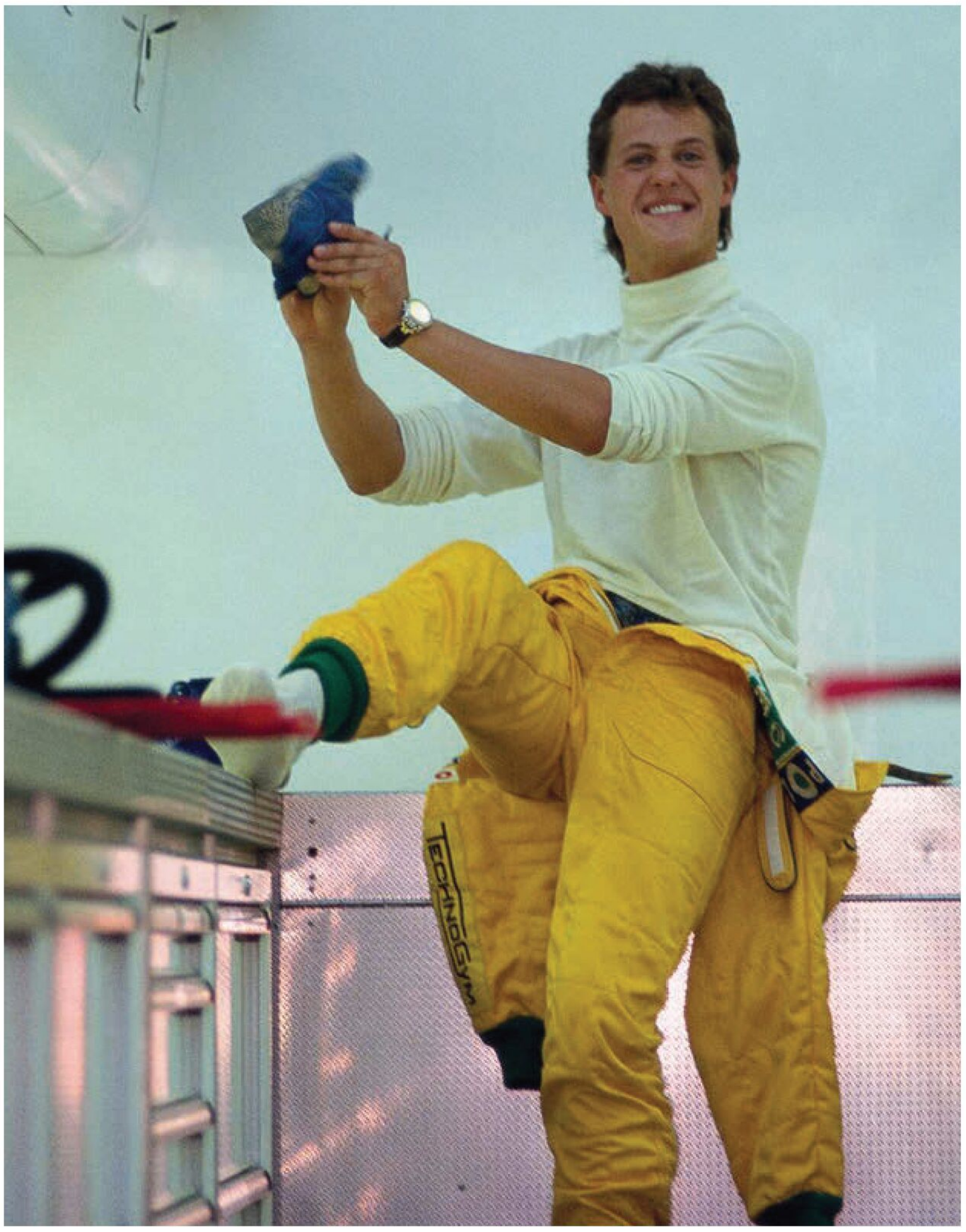
Jordan was left without his new driver and hired Moreno instead, while Schumacher began what would be a glorious association with Benetton by scoring a fifth place at Monza.

"I don't want the sympathy vote," said Jordan at Monza. "And, I don't want this being blown up into the little team getting screwed over by the big team. But I do want to prove that Benetton can't do this to us without a fuss being made. We pushed Benetton into a corner it didn't expect."

Walkinshaw was more circumspect. "Michael came to us completely clear and free. We would not have taken him otherwise. We had been talking to Jochen Neeerpasch about Michael as a possible driver for 1992 and we have been keeping a close eye on him for a long time after his sportscar performances."

Indeed they had, and they had kept a close eye on the destiny of his signature. He tied him to a deal right through to the end of 1995 after that initial contact. The only proviso was that Mercedes would be able to buy back his deal for a single dollar should the three-pointed star ever decide to enter F1 itself.

Who knew it would take almost a further two decades for that dream to become a reality?



The German was all smiles at the Italian Grand Prix despite the furore in the background

Start of a title-winning partnership: Schumacher signed a long-term deal with the team

FORMULA 1'S 30-MINUTE RUSH HOUR

A bulging entry list prompted a high-pressure solution for qualifying in 1991, by **Matt James**

Not for the past 30 years have there been more than 16 teams on the Formula 1 entry list, aside from the remarkable 18 that attempted to qualify for grands prix in 1991.

Pre-qualifying had been reintroduced to F1 in 1988 when the three new teams on the grid in that season – Scuderia Italia, Rial and EuroBrun – plus 1987 latecomer Coloni, would all be forced into the Friday morning session that started promptly with an 0730hrs wake-up call.

The system ranked the teams' performance over the last six months, which would then lock that squad into taking part in the shootout sessions. There would be a review at the midpoint of the year which, for 1991 was after the British Grand Prix.

The two newest teams on the grid, Modena (Nicola Larini and Eric van der Poele) and Jordan (Bertrand Gachot and Andrea de Cesaris), would join with Scuderia Italia (Emanuele Pirro and JJ Lehto), Coloni (with a one-car entry for Pedro Chaves, later replaced by Naoki Hattori) and Fondmetal (with a single car for Olivier Grouillard and then Gabriele Tarquini)

"As least Coloni saw the world"

Larini and the Modena team escaped pre-qualifying after British GP

in the high-pressure to earn the right to even be able practice.

Once Jordan had got a handle on its nascent Ford-powered 191, the green cars joined the Dallara chassis, being run by Scuderia Italia, as easily the fastest machines in the session. When only four would progress to the main event, that was disheartening for the others…

That meant the pair of two-car squads left the rest aiming to pick up any scraps should either one of the faster teams get things wrong. Four times over the first eight races, it was the same drivers in the top four.

The curse was about to fall on those who had underperformed during the first part of 1991. The promotion and relegation system allowed Jordan and Scuderia Italia to shake of the shackles from the German Grand Prix onwards.

Remarkably, the Modena team – which had scraped a seventh-place finish with Larini in the opening grand prix of the campaign in the USA,its only finish in the opening eight races – was also boosted to the main grid when the cut-off came.

In their places went the French AGS concern, the two Brabhams of Martin Brundle and Mark Blundell and the Footwork machines. The Footworks had been predominantly piloted by Michele Alboreto and Alex Caffi and struggled with a Porsche powerplant over the opening half of the season. A split with the German firm and a return to Ford motors increased the competitiveness of the car, but the pre-qualifying damage had already been done.

Spare a thought for the tiny Coloni-run team, which persevered with the

Olivier Grouillard escaped pre-qualifying four times in a season spent at Fondmetal and then AGS (above)

Naoki Hattori was one of those saddled with the hopeless Coloni C4

Lehto and Pirro were stand-outs

chronically underfunded and outdated C4 chassis. Chaves was the unlucky incumbent for the majority of the season and not once did the Portuguese racer make it into practice. Consider, too, that the start of the campaign included a leg in America and Brazil, and even when patience was running thin at the end of the year, the Italian team had to head to Japan and Australia.

MN's F1 reporter David Tremayne pulled no punches in his end-of-season review.

"There seems little point in dignifying the Coloni effort by writing anything about it," he slammed. "Saddled with the C4, it had absolutely no chance and simply succeeded in spending a lot of money going around the world, and yet not going anywhere..."

The pre-qualifying sessions necessitated an early start for teams

BIG PICTURE

Schumacher holds it all together for Mercedes

While the title battle was played out in his wake, Michael Schumacher underlined once again what a star of the future he would be with victory in the final round of the World Sportscar Championship in the Mercedes C291 in Japan shared with Karl Wendlinger. He shot into the lead when Yannick Dalmas' Peugeot broke its motor, and took the flat-12 machine to its only victory of the season. Schumacher built up a lead in the first stint, much of which was dropped by Wendlinger in the second before the young German put his foot down in the third to seal a famous win. It was only his second race finish in seven races in the 3.5-litre car.

WORLD SPORTSCAR CHAMPIONSHIP: BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR...

Matt James looks at a tempestuous season for long-distance racing in 1991

Derek Warwick and Teo Fabi celebrate their Silverstone win as third-placed Jaguar racer Martin Brundle, who drove solo, looks on (r)

The idea was to push sportscar racing into a new sphere. What better way to turn the spotlight onto the division that fit the cars with F1 engines and shake off the old image of driving to a set lap time in an order to hit the fuel target?

The new Category 1 as derived for 1991 where the top teams would all use F1-sourced 3.5-litre motors and the class would almost become run for thinly veiled formula cars.

But there were perhaps more underhand reasons behind the FIA's drive to change the landscape for sportscars. Group C, which had comprised the headline sportscar class since 1982, had the sport's governors worried.

The Porsche v Mercedes v Jaguar battles had elevated the class to popularity levels where encroaching on grand prix racing. By determining a new future for sportscar racing, FIA president Max Mosley – and his deputy at the time, Bernie Ecclestone – would be able to keep their friends close, but those who might be able to steal any thunder from Formula 1 even closer…

Jaguar, Peugeot and Mercedes – all with a sprinkling of top driving talents – were able to lead the line with their 3.5-litre normally aspirated powerplants, but the rest of the field were left with a huge hike in budgets and technology just to keep a place at the top table.

The championship would take place over eight rounds, mostly of 430kms (an anathema to fans of long-distance racing) and would also include the Le Mans 24 Hours (see sidebar).

For the twice-around-the-clock race, teams that had been prevalent in the Group C era had been tempted to use their more reliable grandfathered machines, rather than the highly-strung Category 1 cars – Mercedes and Jaguar among them.

Peugeot (which had stuck with its 3.5-litre 905 at Le Mans as it had no Group C machine to fall back on) was the newcomer on the World Sportscar Championship block with its car that had made two toe-in-the-water appearances in the arena at the end of 1990. It was a programme that would ultimately provide the French firm with a powerplant that McLaren used in grand prix racing in 1994.

Mercedes vigorously embraced the new division, having a crew of hungry young racers alongside its established stars and it created the C291. It featured a bespoke flat-12 3.5-litre motor. Jaguar, meanwhile, was able to use the off-the-peg and proven Ford HB V10 engine as had been proved in Formula 1. Ross Brawn penned the gorgeous XJR-14 alongside John Piper and Mark Thomas.

The remainder of those who embraced the Category 1 rules were privateers, most notably among them was the Euro Racing Spice SE90C of Dutch duo Cor Euser and Charles Zwolsman. Some stalwarts of sportscar racing, including Brun, Courage, Kremer and Mazda, were still on the full-season grid, but their Group C-based cars we effectively regulated out of the game.

While Peugeot's 905 might not have been the sharpest tool when it made its race debut at the end of 1990, it was the car that scooped the honours in the first race of the new dawn. Frenchman Philippe Alliot and team-mate Mauro Baldi prevailed and, ominously, it was the only one of the new generation of cars to be classified at Fuji in Japan. It might have finished one lap ahead of

Rosberg's Peugeot's 905 leads the pack

Mercedes, but it was only the German firm's older-spec five-litre V8 that took the flag in the hands of Jean-Louis Schlesser and Jochen Mass.

A rule tweak for 1991 also meant that if a driver shared more than one car – a practice that was commonplace in Group C – then they would forfeit their points. That meant that in certain races the 'other' driver who would be brought in to support a title campaign could cross the line first but be ineligible for World championship scores. Not only was that a nightmare for statisticians, it was another unnecessary and confusing amendment to the sportscar cocktail that fans had known so well.

That was the case at the second round at Monza. While Martin Brundle shared the winning Jag with Derek Warwick, he went unrewarded as he had also been partnered with Teo Fabi in the second-placed Silk Cut-backed TWR machine. Mercedes again split its options with one new 3.5-litre car for Michael Schumacher and Karl Wendlinger – which failed to finish – while Schlesser and Mass took the older-spec machine to third.

There was a glorious British return for Jag at Silverstone when the machines dominated again. Brundle stunned onlookers in driving solo, but it was the machine shared by Fabi and Warwick that won, beating the Merc of Schumacher and Wendlinger now the Germans had finally got a handle on the reliability of the C291. Brundle was third but it was a significant result as it was the first time that the new Category 1 cars had been prevalent enough to lock-out the rostrum.

While Mazda pulled the rug from

Michael Schumacher won in Japan

Old versus new as Mass/Schlesser head the earlier version of Schumacher/Wendlinger

everyone's feet at Le Mans, Jag was back to the top at the Nurburgring. As if to highlight the pressure that was ramping up between Jaguar and Mercedes, there was an ugly incident in qualifying when XJR-14 pilot Warwick and Merc's Schumacher squared up to each other after an on-track altercation.

In the race Warwick got his revenge, leading home Fabi, while new recruit David Brabham had shared cars with both of them and was therefore ineligible for any points.

The sixth race at Magny-Cours produced one of those moments when a French team suddenly decides to bolt its car together properly in front of its home crowd. It marked a 1-2 finish for Keke Rosberg and Yannick Dalmas, followed by Philippe Alliot and Mauro Baldi. The cars had been nowhere in qualifying and team boss Jean Todt had circumspectly said that he hoped the cars would reach the end.

When they did, they were two laps ahead of the Fabi/Brabham (again ineligible for points) Jaguar. It hadn't been plain sailing for Jag's second car either. As MN reported: "Things were bad in the TWR pit, where the team was about to throw a barbecue and Warwick was the host…" The Hampshire man climbed back into the cockpit and rescued fifth spot.

Jaguar wrapped up the teams' title in the penultimate race in Mexico, but it spelt disaster for its title-chaser Fabi. He was feeling seriously unwell in the build-up to the race and his car needed an engine change after morning warm-up. It made it to the end of the pitlane to start the race but went no further when the oil pressure died. Whether Fabi would have been able to race it is a moot point. Warwick's charge was blunted when a late pitstop led to a failed starter motor and that restricted him to sixth place.

Merc was thwarted by electrical problems and a failed oil pump so guess what? Peugeot did it again with the drivers in the same order as they had been at Magny-Cours. While it had taken a while for the lion to roar, it had fully cleared its throat by this stage.

The season's showdown was at the Autopolis track and Fabi finally got his just rewards. While Brabham nursed the damaged XJR-14, which was shedding one of its front louvre over the closing stages and causing handling troubles, third place was enough. Second place for Warwick couldn't deny his former Toleman Formula 1 team-mate.

But the most remarkable thing about the race in Japan was the victory by Michael Schumacher and Karl Wendlinger. MN's sportscar reporter Marl Skewis wrote: "Until Sunday afternoon, not even a gambling man under the influence would have handed over a Deutschmark on the probability of such a shock result."

The donkey work had been done by Schumacher and the man who had already made his F1 debut by this stage, had truly shown his ability in what would be his final sportscar outing.

It was almost the death knell for the category itself too. The 3.5-litre era that had provided some of the most spectacular sportscars, was racing an uphill struggle to survive. It wasn't until early December in 1991 that the

Cor Euser battled on with his Euro Racing-run Spice with a Ford DFR 3.5-litre V8 engine

FIA decided that it would be given a stay of execution into 1992 – however, it would only be permitted to take place should 20 entries be lodged by January 31 at the start of the year.

This was a climb down from the FIA, which had initially drawn the curtain down on the Category 1 class at the end of the season. The manufacturers and teams involved, led by Peugeot lynchpin Jean Todt in unison with representatives from Lola, Toyota, Jaguar and Mazda all battled hard to get the extension.

FIA boss Max Mosley had been harsh in his attacks on that which had played out in 1991. He said: "Nobody wants the series more than I do. But we didn't fulfil the criteria for a World championship. [In 1991] we had a series which wasn't really worthy of the title World championship. Despite all the promises, when we went around the table, we looked set to have an even smaller field in 1992.

"For example, when you compared the World Sportscar Championship to the grand prix at Magny-Cours, there was just no public there. The same at Silverstone. When you look at the crowd which attended Nurburgring – even with the might of Mercedes – it wasn't anything like the crowd they got for touring cars (Mosley conveniently forgets to mention the 45,000 crowd in Mexico here… - Ed).

"It is not really a question of killing sportscar racing – It committed suicide," claimed Mosley.

Mosley was talking about those friends that he had kept very close indeed. A number of them felt hugely let down, but it was a move that had been somewhat predictable.

Mazda took a Japanese manufacturer's first Le Mans win with its 787B

The sun finally rises for the East

While there was a new tide in the World Sportscar Championship for 1991 with the 3.5-litre screamers at the front of the pack, the extreme reliability demands of Le Mans meant a tried-and-tested product was more likely to see the end.

Jaguar reverted to its XJR-12 model, fitted with the XJS-derived 7.4-lite powerplant, while Mercedes wheeled out its C11s mated to a 5.0-litre turbocharged growler of an engine.

Peugeot, with no sportscar heritage to draw on, was stuck with its new Category 1 3.5-litre. It would be interesting to see how it lasted and, because it was the only car playing to the new rules, it was guaranteed pole as the top slots on the grid were earmarked for the newer cars. At least that was one publicity box ticked…

Mazda, meanwhile, had taken a different approach and fitted its Wankel engine into a car that was a blend of the Group C regulations and the American IMSA-spec regulations. It meant the car was lighter and more nimble, but it was giving away power to the big-banger pure Group C machines.

An early flourish from the fast-but-fragile Peugeot team – as expected – was short-lived. A pitstop fire for the Mauro Baldi/Phillipe Alliot/Jean-Pierre Jabouille car, precipitated engine woes and it was out after 22 laps. The sister car of Keke Rosberg/Yannick Dalmas/Pierre-Henri Raphanel only went 40 laps further.

Jaguar was suffering dramas of its own. It had been saddled with 200kg of extra weight in the Silk Cut cars and were nowhere near the pace they needed to be, which left the race as an open goal for Mercedes.

However, the leading car of Michael Schumacher/Karl Wendlinger/Fritz Kreutzpointner was struck by serious gearbox problems in the early hours which lost it five laps, and then suffered from overheating. The car of Jonathan Palmer/Stanley Dickens/Kurt Thimm was retired with a broken engine mount after running over some debris. The final nail in the Sauber-run car's coffin was when Alain Ferte brought his car, which he was sharing with Jochen Mass and Jean-Louis Schlesser, into the pits also with overheating and it was forced to retire.

Incredibly, the unfancied Mazda crewed by Johnny Herbert, Bertrand Gachot and Volker Weidler, had outrun them all. The dayglo orange and green car had been detuned before the race to allow it to run one lap longer than its rivals in between stops, and that had allowed it to remain in the hunt when the cracks started to appear for Mercedes. It upped its pace and the tortoise broke all the hares.

EASTERN PROMISE

Against Peugeot, Mercedes and Jaguar, Mazda sneaked a win at Le Mans, the first for a Japanese manufacturer. **Matt James** looks back

Wankel engine deafened onlookers but was fast and reliable

Nigel Stroud's car design was allied to well organised team work off-track

The rotaty-engined Mazda 787B was the ultimate iteration of the Japanese firm's attack on Group and brought it the ultimate prize with victory at Le Mans in 1991.

The super-loud Wankel-engined car had a weight advantage over the original Group C cars and ran at 830kg, compared to the others which were tipping the scales at nearly 1000kg. That weight meant the 787B was more nimble than the rests of the car on the grid for Le Mans on June 22-23. This not only helped with reliability, but it also meant that the 787Bs could go longer between pitstops than its rivals.

The car was a development of Nigel Stroud-designed 767 and ran on Dunlop tyres using a five-speed Mazda and Porsche designed gearbox. As well as the under-the-skin changes, Mazdaspeed recruited five-time Le Mans winner Jacky Ickx on to the management team to buy into the Belgian's expertise.

Mercedes was comfortably the fastest car at Le Mans in 1991 with its older-spec five-litre V8 turbocharged C11. The German firm was dominating the race into the early hours of Sunday morning - but then the rot set in. One car was struck by gearbox problems while the other ran over some debris and was forced into the pits for repairs. An overheating engine did for

Winning Mazda suffered only a blown headlight bulb and a wheel bearing change as it stormed to victory

did for the last Sauber's chances of a victory.

The 787B had run virtually trouble-free at La Sarthe. The three-strong line-up included a machine for Mauricio Sandro Sala, David Kenney and Stefan Johansson alongside a car for Pierre Dieudonne, Takahasi Yorino and Yojira Terada. The garish green and orange colour scheme was revered for the car of Johnny Herbert, Volker Weidler and Bertrand Gachot.

The latter trio prevailed at Le Mans in a flawless performance. The only issues the leading car suffered was a blown headlight bulb and a precautionary wheel bearing change as a mid-race stop uncovered a slightly higher temperature than it should have been.

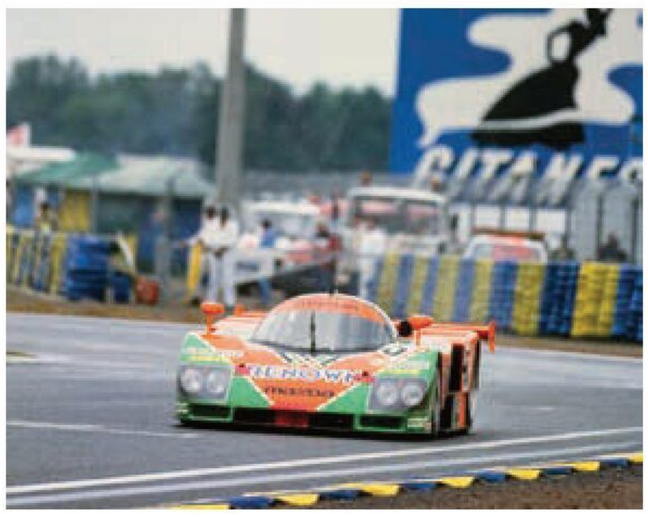
Mazda scored a remarkable win and the drivers become the first crew of a Japanese car to claim the spoils in the classic twice-around-the-clock race. By the end, it had a handsome two-lap advantage over the 7.4-litre Jaguar XJR-12 of Davy Jones, Raul Boesel and Michel Ferte.

The Mazda had completed 362 laps in France, or more than 3050 miles.

Only Weidler and Gachot were able to mount the rostrum at the end of the race at Herbert, who had handled the last two stints, had to be dragged from the cockpit as he had collapsed with dehydration. He blamed some "dodgy spaghetti" for his woe, but it was clearly combined with the effort of his greatest career victory.

It was Mazda's day of days as the Mazdaspeed 787B would never hit the highs again. Across the eight-race World Sportscar Championship, the 787's next best result after Le Mans was a fifth spot at the Nurburgring. The 787B was wheeled out for the final round of the season at Autopolis in Japan and the cars finished ninth and 10th.

Mazda finished fifth in the manufacturers; standings, but that didn't matter: the headlines had already been written in France. The winning car now has pride of place in the Mazda museum in Hiroshima.


Mazdaspeed 787B had its day of days

"The 787B managed to reach over 3050 miles"

BIG PICTURE

The multi-million pound car park in Africa

Not exactly showroom condition, the event-weary World Rally Championship machines lay forlornly after a punishing test on the Safari Rally. Juha Kankkunen's Lancia Delta heads the queue lined up in order of their finishing positions. The Finn had just taken the first of his five victories across the season which would push him to his third World title. The Martini-backed Italian car sits proudly in front of Mikael Ericsson's Toyota Celica, which had finished nearly half-a-minute behind. Jorge Recalde's Martini Lancia finished in third place.

JAPAN VERSUS ITALY

The Group A period of the World Rally Championship reached a new level of competition in 1991: Toyota versus Lancia. **Nick Garton** tells the tale

Sainz crashed out of the Australian event

Since hastily adopting Group A 'showroom' cars as the premier category of the World Rally Championship before the 1987 season, the FIA and manufacturers had been playing catch-up with themselves. Meanwhile, Lancia had made hay and to the end of the decade the question was never if the Martini-striped cars would win but which one – a question that was often resolved by the team principal before the first stage had been run.

The 1990 season changed all of that as Toyota's sleek Celica GT-Four came on song, bristling with innovation. Advanced engine electronics and the first purpose-built anti-lag system to be seen in rallying (as opposed to the Heath Robinson 'umluft' on the Group B Audis and F1-style Dispositif Pre-rotation Variable on the Peugeot 205 Turbo 16). This car, allied to the silken skills of Carlos Sainz at the wheel, had snatched the 1990 drivers' title out of Lancia's hands.

For 1991, the Japanese giant was intent on seizing the manufacturers' crown as well. The season would be fought out over a 14-round calendar and contested by 11 manufacturers: Lancia and Toyota, plus Ford with its four-wheel-drive Sierra Cosworth saloons and Mazda's continued presence with its under-performing 323.

Audi would make token outings with its 90 quattro, Renault and Citroen had their front-wheel-drive superminis, BMW's rear-drive M3 would be present on Tarmac rounds and then there was the rest of the Japanese contingent: the handy-looking Nissan Sunny four-wheel-drive pocket rocket and the bigger Mitsubishi Galant and the Subaru Legacy adding to the variety.

Didier Auriol's Lancia heads for 12th place on the season-closing Lombard RAC Rally

The contenders gathered in January for their traditional season start in Monte Carlo. The starring role was taken by Ford's new signing, Francois Delecour, who hustled the bulky Sierra saloon with indecent haste and put himself within sight of a momentous debut win before the big Ford's suspension gave out on the Col de Turini. First blood thus went to Carlos Sainz.

A modest entry greeted February's trip to Sweden, with the series regulars only represented by the Mitsubishis and a lone entry for Lancia's second-string Jolly Club with Didier Auriol at the wheel. Officially, Auriol was in Sweden because he wanted points towards the drivers' championship. In fact, his Fina-sponsored Integrale spent 1991 as the unofficial test mule for developing the fabled 1992 Evoluzione, and some of those parts needed testing in the snow.

The early lead was held by Timo Salonen's Mitsubishi but at the start of the second day a stage marshal started the countdown early and the 1985 World champion was still faffing with his belts and chin strap when given the order to go. In a state of high dudgeon, Salonen crashed out, allowing Swedish team-mate Kenneth Eriksson to win from fellow countryman Mats Jonsson's Toyota, with Markku Alen recording Subaru's first-ever WRC podium in third.

"Delecour put himself in sight of a debut win"

The Subaru Legacy was another car bristling with technological advances such as proper anti-lag, fully adjustable suspension and even the first steps towards active differentials. Unlike the more established Japanese effort, however, the scale of the operation was considerably smaller, as Prodrive's technical chief David Lapworth recalls:

"I often compare the way things were in those days with the way it is these days," he says. "We are able to do things so much more in-depth, so much more thoroughly, but it does bring with it a kind of inertia that we didn't have in those days. It was a very small team and we could move really quickly so, yes, I think we did a pretty good job in a really short time. You didn't need much complicated project management, there wasn't much in the way of paperwork or process in those days; it was just half

Francois Delecour came close to a shock win in Monte Carlo before suspension dramas hit the four-door Ford

a dozen people who knew each other very well and were just getting on with it."

Portugal came next, and the mixed-surface event delivered Sainz his second victory in two outings, chased to the finish by the Jolly Club Lancia of Auriol ahead of the works car of Miki Biasion. In miserable, gloomy conditions one thing that onlookers noticed was the sheet of flame that the Lancias fired off when they downshifted, sometimes as much as two metres in length. The root cause of this can be explained after the passage of 30 years by Lancia specialist Adam Midghall, whose Rally Replay business has become synonymous with the Italian machines.

"Lancia did a lot of development work with the Ferrari Formula 1 team, where [former Lancia team boss] Cesare Fiorio was in charge at that time," Midghall points out. "F1 had done an awful lot of fuel development

Carlos Sainz and Luis Moya head for victory in Corsica, their third win of the season

Francois Chatriot's Subaru Legacy storms past the finest Corsican architecture as the Frenchman heads to ninth place

Juha Kankkunen (r) scored victory on the Safari Rally, celebrating with co-driver Juha Piironen (l) and Lancia's Claudio Lombardi

but Lancia was probably running even more potent stuff again. A lot of time was spent on matching up the blends, the ignition and engine mapping and everything that the fuel touched, but a good basic ratio of aviation fuel and toluene would be 60/40."

Despite all this witchcraft behind the scenes, Lancia was lagging behind in the World championship and Toyota had made victory on the next event, the Safari, a primary target for the season. The Japanese teams were very open about their preparations for the event and Nissan proudly showed off the telemetry equipment that would keep its cars in constant touch with the engineers, allowing them to read real-time data from the ECU from one of the two close support helicopters that flew less than 50 feet above the cars through each stage.

Most manufacturers had two helicopters but Lancia had three. Many

Kenneth Eriksson won his home event in Sweden after team-mate Salonen crashed out

British driver David Llewellin attacks the rough and dusty Greek stages on the Acropolis Rally as he heads for ninth place

people believed that this was simply one-upmanship but in fact Magnetti-Marelli had devised an engine management system that could sustain a two-way conversation. The Lancia's ECU could be tweaked by remote control from up above. But if this detail was one that it kept quiet, then the other special ingredient in Lancia's set-up was much easier to see. It was Juha Kankkunen.

"I'm a farmer's boy so I'm used to driving on the fields, you know?" laughs Lancia's '91 team leader. "But I had a good teacher there as well. Bjorn Waldegard. I mean, unbelievable guy he was. A specialist. Safari was a bit more competitive and fast and the sections you had to count, you know: this section you can probably clear because it's dirt road but the other one is so rough that you have to be careful with the car and things."

When the rally began, Kankkunen was content to sit close behind Sainz and wait for the right moment to strike – although when the moment came, the Finn found his rival less than agreeable. A front suspension top mount broke on the Celica, slowing Sainz sufficiently for Kankkunen to catch him in the stage but he couldn't find a way around the Spaniard, getting pelted with rocks until eventually he got through and drove to victory.

"The Finn found his rival less than agreeable"

By now, the rest of the manufacturers had faded into the background. On pace alone, it was Toyota's season to lose and on the next round, the Tour de Corse, the Celicas had durable ceramic brakes fitted while the Lancias were forced to lug heavy water-cooling equipment

Sainz starred in Portugal taking victory for Toyota in its season-long fight with Lancia

round the stages. It was an easy win for the Spaniard with Auriol managing to finish second in the hybrid '92-spec Lancia.

Back on gravel for the Acropolis, Sainz led but was unsettled by a motorcycle coming towards him on one stage and a car on the next, finally picking up a puncture that allowed Kankkunen through to win. No such problems struck the Spaniard on the next event in New Zealand, where the Lancias were slowed by an absence of their special fuel.

Sainz won again at the halfway point in Argentina despite a Lancia Armada of four cars and every conceivable service vehicle. Such was Sainz's confidence that on the superspecial he did donuts for the adoring Latin fans and promptly broke the gearbox, having to reverse to the line. His turbo also blew, requiring team-mate Mohammed ben Sulayem to bump-draft him back to service.

Kankkunen won two on the bounce in Finland and Australia, the first by sheer speed and the second after Sainz crashed out of the lead in an accident that left his neck twinging for the remainder of the season.

Next came Sanremo where all of the Lancias were outfitted with the 1992-spec electronics and a fleet of five cars to try and shoo Toyota off the podium. Kankkunen crashed out but the strategy worked like a charm, with Auriol claiming victory at the head of a 1-2-3-5 and Delecour's Ford claiming fourth. Toyota's dreams of the manufacturers' crown were thus ended.

The esoteric Ivory Coast event was left for Mitsubishi and Audi to argue over and then Sainz dropped out of the lead of his home event in Spain, retiring with transmission failure while Kankkunen finished second. It all came down to the RAC Rally and here the Subarus were on mighty form with Alen and McRae setting fastest times – but so too was Kankkunen. The Finn imperiously claimed his third WRC crown with his second RAC win (from Eriksson and Sainz) and Lancia completed its final WRC clean sweep in fine style.

ITALIAN STYLE WITH A PURPOSE

Lancia's Delta HF was suddenly thrown into becoming a flagship rally car as **Nick Garton** explains

The Delta worked on all terrains as Juha Kankkunen proved by winning the 1991 Safari Rally

Creature comforts were few in the Delta for driver and co-driver

The Delta was a star on Tarmac rallies with a stellar driver line-up

With its 8-valve engine mated to a six-speed gearbox, the Lancia Delta HF targeted the manufacturers' title

In April 1986, Lancia unveiled a new road car at the Turin Motor Show: the Delta HF 4WD Turbo. With forced induction and all-wheel drive becoming status symbols, the pretty little hatchback was as much of a fashion accessory as shoulder pads and highlighted hair for the style-conscious '80s.

Yet just within a few weeks, the FIA had responded to the tragedies that killed Group B by promoting Group A 'showroom' cars to the World Rally Championship's premier category. Suddenly, the Italian fashion accessory had found its purpose.

In the 1987 season, the Lancias were barely challenged despite being limited by shorter suspension travel and smaller brake size. The eight-valve Integrale, introduced at the 1988 Rally Portugal, fixed these shortcomings, as well as adding more power and a six-speed transmission.

At the 1989 Rallye Sanremo, the definitive 16-valve Integrale arrived with a bigger turbo and in excess of 350bhp on call through trick engine management, completing a clean sweep of titles for the third consecutive season. This definitive Integrale would keep Lancia competitive in 1990, although Toyota's Carlos Sainz snaffled the drivers' crown after a season-long duel.

"Lancia focused attention on its warhorse"

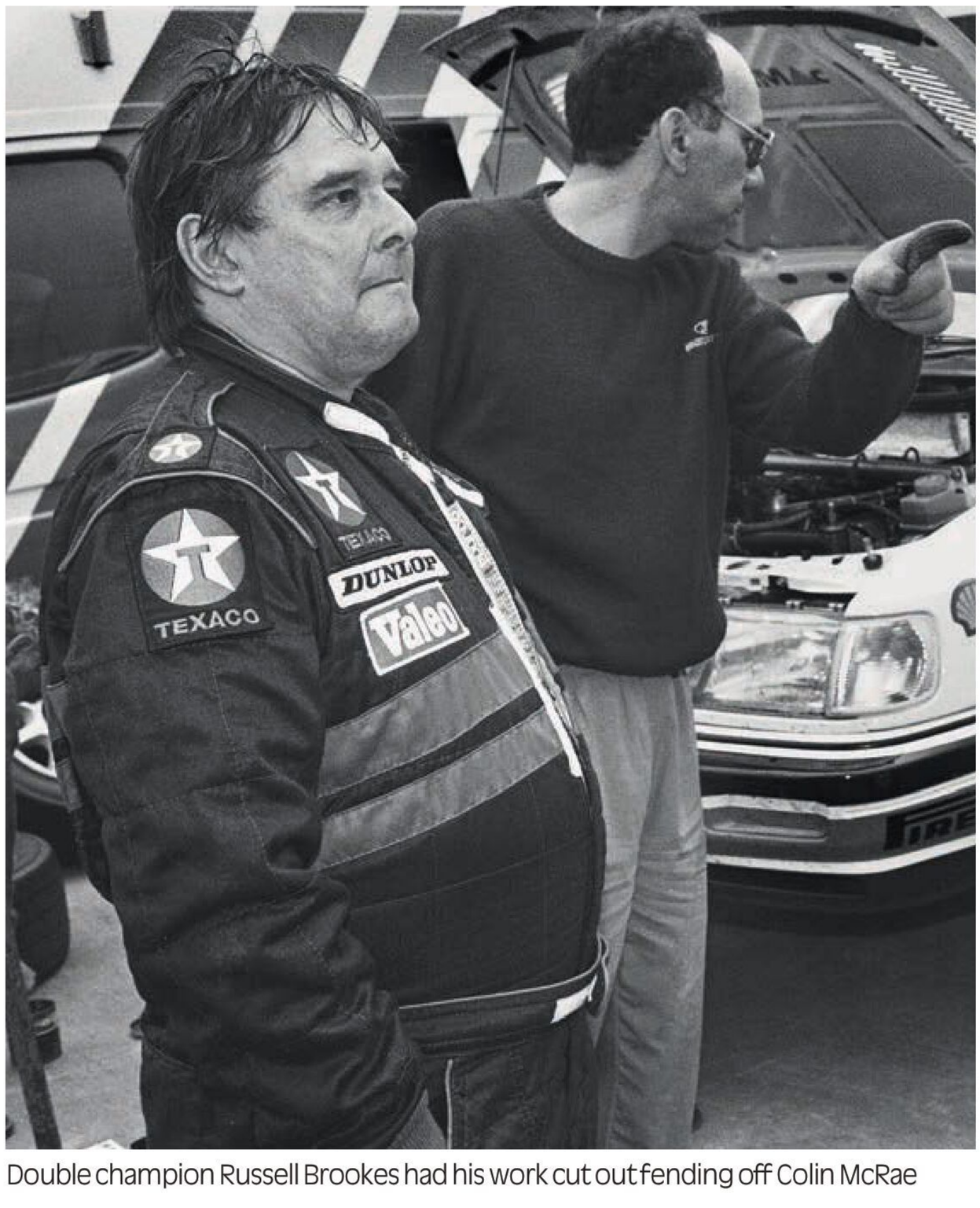
For 1991, Lancia focused its attention on keeping its three-year-old warhorse going against the intensifying Japanese opposition. Suspension and tyres were a key focus, with Lancia fostering a symbiotic relationship with Michelin and using Integrales as test mules for the suite of rubber available.

Rumours persist of what may or may not have required Lancia's mechanics to change the fire extinguisher bottles at every service or what their windscreen washer bottles were plumbed in to. Integrale expert Adam Midghall insists that all this was smokescreen to distract from the important stuff. Trick electronics for sure. And a few other things…

Fundamentally the 1991 Delta remained an '80s car: agricultural next to the competition. It was a great car, but only when allied to the implacable will of Juha Kankkunen.

STAR GAZING

British rally fans were treated to the birth of a rallying star in 1991. Colin McRae, with Derek Ringer sat alongside, hit the British stages in style. **Nick Garton** recalls the season



Double champion Russell Brookes had his work cut out fending off Colin McRae

The British Open Rally Championship of 1991 was a two-way battle between youth and experience. As Scottish youngster Colin McRae, renowned for his spectacular speed at the wheel of Group N Ford Sierras, was recruited to Prodrive's slick Rothmans-backed Subaru works squad, where he would take on twice champion Russell Brookes with R.E.D. preparing a Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4 for the Redditch charger.

The season began with a chilly, wet February outing to Yorkshire for the Talkland International, where McRae took first blood comfortably on gravel with Brookes in second. The McRae win was repeated on Tarmac at the Circuit of Ireland. Back on gravel at the Welsh International, however, McRae went off spectacularly and Brookes took victory.

A dominant home win on the Scottish restored McRae's campaign but for his engineer in that season, Alan McGuinness, the narrow margin in the points table was nothing to be overly concerned about.

"I never had a doubt that Colin might lose the British championship," he says.

Colin McRae and Derek Ringer were a formidable partnership in the Subaru Legacy with four wins during the season

"On pure pace there wasn't a chance, as good as Russell was. [R.E.D.] were a strong, well-run team but with Colin, if you could keep the car running, he was pretty well invincible in those days."

A lot of McGuinness's confidence stemmed from the fact that he had just arrived at Prodrive directly from R.E.D., where his own full-time career as a rally engineer had flourished.

"I joined R.E.D. in 1986 and we were running Metro 6R4s for [Didier] Auriol in France and things like that, that led to the British and the French championship with Jimmy [McRae] with the Sierra Cosworth and of course that led on to the early years of Colin. So I did go through that period with Colin in the Ford years – welding blooming staples on to doors as he drove the Group N Sierra Cosworth far too fast for the car's own ability. So the driver was obviously something special."

Brookes won in Wales but McRae fought back to win on home soil on the Scottish

"McRae took first blood comfortably on gravel"

At Christmas in 1990, Colin McRae signed a contract with Prodrive, while R.E.D. was looking at a slightly uncertain future with sponsors in short supply. Jimmy and Colin McRae spotted an opportunity to move McGuinness across with them: a friendly face amid their new surroundings.

"When Colin arrived at Prodrive he was a little bit shy and he was obviously quite young and had a raw talent but he was just a bit overawed by it all and I have to say so was I," McGuinness remembers.

"I knew all the people there because they had been running BMWs in France when I was running Sierra Cosworths and David and Prodrive had massive aspirations of doing World championships. That was a massive part of the attraction for me because when you came

McRae took a big stride towards the title with an electrifying Manx International win, the penultimate round of the season

through the national and international rallies like I'd done, then you really want to get to the top end… Prodrive had attracted a lot of people like that. The team was very raw but extremely enthusiastic and dedicated. David was in full DR-mode, a whirlwind of energy that made things happen!"

Prodrive's ambition was writ large in its presentation, which was all rather novel for a man like McGuinness, being used to teams that were rather laissez-faire about their appearance.

"R.E.D. lagged behind Prodrive in presentation but they had a really good set of lads and the competition was very good natured," McGuinness says. "[We] had shared the same service park and the same laybys on mountains in France for years. There was a mutual respect between both sets of camps."

The battle for the British title carried on in Ulster, where McRae went out with gearbox failure, having already lost time when an under-inflated tyre burst on a jump. Brookes was unable to fully capitalise, however, because Bertie Fisher claimed a popular home win, but nobody ever considered the British series to be an easy thing to win in its pomp.

"Those events were as long as the World championship rounds are today," McGuinness says. "They had iconic stages in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. A lot of spectators, quite exciting service parks and that's really where Colin honed his flamboyant driving style because it suited the Legacy [which], let's be honest, looked like a bit of a taxi! It didn't look like it should be doing the things that he made it do, and I

Engineer McGuinness's work with Jimmy McRae (l) led to him working with son Colin (r)

"Colin honed his style with Legacy"

Local hero Bertie Fisher headed home Brookes for a Ford 1-2 on the Ulster Rally, McRae not finishing the event

think that contributed to the whole excitement."

McRae was in electrifying form on the penultimate round, the Manx International. By the time that the field reached Tholt-y-Wil he had a three-minute lead and, even better, his team-mate, Francois Chatriot, passed Brookes for second just before the final stage. All that was left was for the young Scot to take a subdued trundle to third place on Telford's Audi Sport Rally to secure the title.

Elsewhere, the British National Championship of 1991 was a thriller, with just two points being the margin of victory for Ford driver Trevor Smith over the eight-round season, from Japanese runner-up Hideaki Miyoshi in his Mitsubishi Gallant. That same two-point margin was all that separated the top two men in the BTRDA Gold Star championship, with Irishman Richie Holfield pedalling Bill Gwynne's Metro 6R4 to the title from the Escort RS1800 of Warren Phillikirk.

In the one-make series, Richard Burns and new co-driver Robert Reid built on the Englishman's 1990 success to claim the Peugeot Challenge, while the Skoda Trophy ran as two classes, the modern Favorit division being won by Kevin Williams while the rear-engined Estelles were topped by Christopher Bevan.

Richard Burns was Peugeot Challenge champion as one-make rallying found future stars

Jimmy McRae took third on the Scottish making it a 1-3 for the family as Colin took the win

BIG PICTURE

Over and out: McRae retires from RAC Rally

After winning the British Rally Championship, Colin McRae was eager to show what he could do on the World stage. The curtain-closing RAC Rally was his opportunity. He had taken seven stage wins and was 10th overall before he crashed out and not even the enthusiastic efforts of the British fans could get the remains of his Subaru Legacy back on to the tracks. No other sport allows fans to be so close and so involved with the action and be instrumental in keeping participants in the competition.

EASTERN PROMISE

The Macau Grand Prix had positioned itself as the ultimate headline-grabber for single-seater drivers by 1991. As an end-of-season shootout it brought the best from the regions together on one of the most challenging tracks of all. **David Addison** explains

Tom Kristensen would take sixth having won the German F3 title, while David Coulthard (opposite) would take the overall win

First run in 1954 for sportscars, the Macau Grand Prix had happily run most recently for Formula Libre and then Formula Pacific single-seaters until 1983, Ayrton Senna being the winner.

Then, the organisers finally realised that to be taken seriously the event needed to be truly international and to do that it needed an international class. The move to Formula 3 was a successful one, pioneered by event consultant Barry Bland. Up until his death in 2017, Bland was Mr Macau. He organised the F3 entry, the travel, many of the officials imported from the UK and had a contact book like no other. Need a sponsor? Go and see Barry. Driver pulled out at the last minute? Have a word with Barry. As the event grew in importance and reputation, it became the end-of-season F3 shootout. In those days there were healthy national championships across the globe and the Macau circuit, used once a year, was the ultimate leveller. Pass The Macau Test and you were a star.

For 1991, the race attracted a mega entry. To be run over two 15-lap heats with an aggregated result, you had to be consistent. Rickard Rydell (Kawai Steel TOM'S 031F) took pole for leg one, the entry reduced by his food-poisoned team-mate Victor Rosso sitting out the race. Rydell led, but it was David Coulthard's Montagut Fashion Paul Stewart Racing Ralt RT35-Mugen-Honda that was the real danger. On lap two Coulthard dived ahead at Statue and was gone. The only driver who looked remotely like chasing him was Spaniard Jordi Gene who quickly followed Coulthard past Rydell, his Casio West Surrey Racing Ralt RT35-Mugen-Honda being driven on the limit as he attempted to close. It was a vain hope though as each time Jordi went faster and closed, David got the message and pulled away again, the pair trading the lap record. Behind, a distant third was Rydell, while fourth was Max Angelelli (RC Motorsport Dallara 391-Volkswagen) ahead of Christian Fittipaldi (Edenbridge Racing with Theodore Racing Reynard 913-Mugen-Honda) and Tom Kristensen (Watsons Water Volkswagen Motorsport Ralt RT35-Volkswagen) rounding out the top six. British Champion Rubens Barrichello (Casio West Surrey Racing Ralt RT35-Mugen-Honda) was a mere seventh.

Franck Lagorce blasts away from the line

The race one result determined the grid for the second stanza and Coulthard jumped away at the green with Gene, his only threat, tucking in behind. Rydell, in need of a stonking drive to make up for a 23-second deficit after leg one, made an appalling start and was 17th on the opening tour. Gene was on the limit: "I nearly had two accidents on the same lap," he told Motoring News post-race. "I pushed too hard. Then I drop back a few metres. It took a lot of effort to get back on the pace again."

As the two pulled away, it was almost a repeat of leg one as Gene would up his pace and then be matched, or bettered, a lap later by the flying Scotsman. Eventually, Gene decided he had to go for it. On lap 12, on the outside at Statue, he went for it. "It was the only way, the only gap possible," he explained. The move was a success, as much down to Gene's bravery as Coulthard's racecraft, David not prepared to lose the aggregate win just for the sake of winning part two. He shadowed Gene

Guia winner Emanuele Pirro flanked by Klaus Ludwig (l) and Kurt Thiim (r)

American Rick Shaw was one of the brave bike racers who tackled the circuit

to the chequer and won on aggregate." It was a bit of fun in the end," Coulthard told MN, "because I could then put a bit of pressure on him and he got crossed up a few times."

On aggregate, Coulthard won from Gene and Fittipaldi, Angelelli fourth. Barrichello took fifth with Kristensen, that year's German F3 king, sixth. Rydell was seventh ahead of Jacques Villeneuve (Ralt RT35-Alfa Romeo) who drove for the charmingly-titled Luckfook Prema Racing squad, the top 10 rounded out by Andrea Gilardi (RC Motorsport Dallara 391-Volkswagen) and Paul Stewart (Montagut Fashion PSR Ralt RT35-Mugen-Honda).

For Coulthard, it was his first race on a street circuit and one that marked him out as a man to watch in the 1992 European Formula 3000 Championship.

There was always more to Macau than just the grand prix itself. The popular Guia Race for touring cars had also blossomed as the international Group A regulations brought competitors from all corners to one grid. However, as Group A had been abandoned by many countries by 1991, the regulation rule set was a bit of a catch all, the race run across three classes. Masahiro Hasemi had dominated in 1990, his Nissan Skyline being too fast for the European teams. BMW and Mercedes, who appreciated the marketing benefits of winning at Macau, said that they wouldn't come unless the Nissans were handicapped, and so it was that the Skylines gained the equivalent of a couple of passengers while BMW and Mercedes just happened to bring their DTM-spec, 2.5-litre rocket ships to play. Those cars had around 80 bhp more than the Group A machinery...

BMW's weekend started badly when Roberto Ravaglia binned his car at low speed in practice and then Joachim Winkelhock's Watson's Racing BMW M3 had a massive accident when the slow Winston Mak (BMW M3) tried to overtake the even slower Prasert Aphiphunya (Toyota AE) and pulled into Winkelhock's path, the German doing 120 mph as he headed down from the hairpin. In the impact with the barriers, Jo's helmet came off and the car was a mess, but amazingly was rebuilt for the race on Sunday

Coulthard won leg one and the following Gene took leg two, but it was the Scotsman who triumphed on aggregate

in which he would take the fastest lap.

On a seventh visit to Macau without a win, it was Emanuele Pirro who started from pole in his Watson's Racing, Schnitzer-run BMW M3 with Hasemi second on the grid. Although Hasemi was furious about, as MN's reporter Bob Constanduros put it, "Having to carry the equivalent of Mrs Hasemi and a couple of little Hasemis," he was up for the fight. He had contemplated starting from the pitlane to save a lap of fuel so worried was he, but went to the grid and used his four-wheel drive to catapult ahead, but lost out to Pirro on lap two. Three laps in and Hasemi was gobbled up by the unofficial DTM race around him as Kurt Thiim (AMG Racing Team Mercedes W250) moved up to second and team-mate Klaus Ludwig took third. Hasemi was a downbeat fourth, while retirements included Ravaglia, Winkelhock and Australian young gun Mark Skaife who, having been a race winner in a Skyline back home, came with high hopes. However, the car wasn't his regular ATCC mount but a Japanese-spec machine with a six-speed box and other different parts and wasn't felt to be as quick as Mark's normal machine.

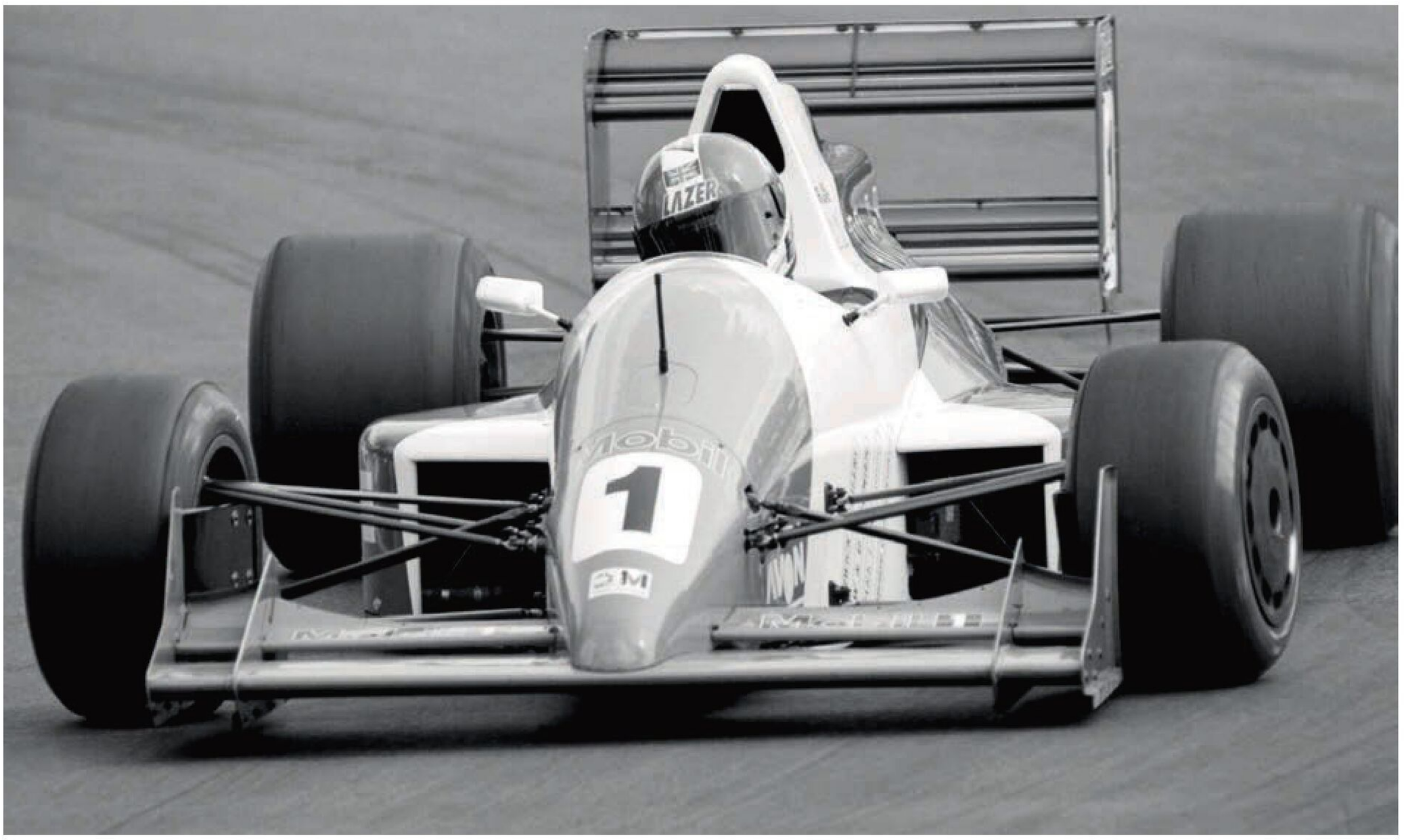
Another feature of Macau was its motorcycle race, for the bravest of the brave. In '91 it was won by Belgian Didier de Radigues (who would carve a car racing career years later) aboard his 500cc Suzuki.

But the star of the weekend was Coulthard. It was a vital stepping-stone to Formula 1. M

Jacques Villeneuve rounds the ultra-tight hairpin in his Ralt-Alfa Romeo

PAUL WARWICK'S TRAGIC TITLE

Derek's younger brother was a revelation in 1991's British F3000, and F1 stardom beckoned before tragedy at Oulton Park, as **Graham Keilloh** explains



Paul Warwick looked "above average but not brilliant" in the lower formulae, but in more powerful machinery he made his breakthrough

Paul Warwick entering 1991 had much to prove. The 22-year-old, 15 years the junior of Formula 1 and sportscar racing brother Derek, was fresh from three inconclusive British Formula 3 campaigns.

"He wasn't amazing I suppose in the lower formulas," Derek admits to Motorsport News, "I just thought that he was above average but not brilliant."

But Paul's salvation awaited. He found his level by taking a step up, initially to International Formula 3000 for a handful of late-1990 outings with Leyton House.

"I thought he was absolutely amazing," Derek recalls, "so we decided to put a big effort in in '91, the team to go with was [reigning champion] Mansell Madgwick [in British F3000].

"I put the funds in for the year and I also took out an insurance policy, if he won it we would get a quarter of a million and that was to go into '92 to do the European [International F3000] season.

"I went to the first [F3000] test [Paul did], he got out the car and I've never seen a bigger smile in my life. Right from the first test he was in front of the car, he wasn't overwhelmed by the power, and you can tell when a driver is in total control by the confidence he shows in and out of the car."

And Derek's view of Paul's potential grew more broadly. "I saw something in him that was better than myself in terms of his application, determination, commitment, but also speed," Derek notes. "He was far more intelligent [than me] but he was also fast and committed. Damon Hill, he was pretty good in the lower formulas but he was exceptional in Formula 1 and 3000 when he got to what I call power-ratio cars, and I think Paul was same ilk.

"He came with me to St Moritz where I do a training camp and up until '91 he was OK but '91 he grew from a boy to a man. He was better, quicker, stronger and tougher than all of us."

Mansell Madgwick soon was convinced too, as Paul swiftly adapted to the style required by the Reynard-Cosworth and its cross-ply Avon tyres. "We thought even before the first race this guy's going to be a bit special," his engineer Humphrey Corbett recalls to MN. "Oulton Park [round one], he was a revelation to us, we thought: 'Wow we've got a star on our hands here'.

"He had amazing car control, he would get out of all sorts of slides and late-braking manoeuvres. He didn't seem to get flustered over anything."

Madgwick boss Robert Synge reminiscences to MN: "At Brands he made a bad start and battled his way back up from about fifth to the lead. That was the race that we probably realised just how good he was because he was passing very competent people and on the Brands Indy circuit which is not the easiest place in a Formula 3000 car. As the season wore on we just realised that he was getting better and better.

"As his confidence grew he became more outgoing. The team loved him, we all got on with him extremely well, he was a very easy driver to run, very appreciative, good with all the guys. It's hard to say but some relationships just click."

Warwick won the season-opener at Oulton Park from Julian Westwood (l) and Gigi Franchi (r) who raced as "Gimax jnr"

Derek Warwick "saw something in [Paul] that was better than myself" before 1991 season

Derek adds: "Paul was a joyful character, he enjoyed life outside of motor racing, he was a good-looking charming individual."

Paul's results flowed in the first five British F3000 rounds: five wins; five poles; four fastest laps. Yet tragedy awaited in that fifth race, back at Oulton.

Dominating as usual, Paul's suspension failed at Knickerbrook, then a rapid turn without much run-off. He was beyond saving.

Paul was awarded the Oulton win, and with six rounds left his lead was 29 points. Yet a late-season run by Fredrik Ekblom meant the Swede would take the crown with victory in Donington Park's season closer.

Ekblom though could only place fourth, behind among others Jason Elliott who had filled Paul's Madgwick seat. The title was Paul's.

"Donington Park was one of the most emotional days of my life because winning the championship

Warwick was unbeatable in British F3000

was the last thing that I, we, he could do for the family, for him, for me, for everything," Derek recalls.

"The meeting was very tense, everybody was tense. I think everybody knew what they wanted but they still had to go out there and deliver. And if you spoke to Fredrik and people like that I think deep down they were so, so pleased. And the joy afterwards, somebody took a load of photographs, I was on the pitwall, and when the race was finally over [the] pictures that I've got just show perfectly just how emotional everybody was."

As noted International F3000 for the following season had been the plan for Paul, with the obvious subsequent step of F1. "We were already talking with Arrows to do some testing," Derek notes; "Paul had already done some straightline testing."

Corbett concludes: "[He] would have gone on to much much greater things. Because a) he was a bloody good driver and b) because of his name, a name like Warwick would certainly open doors. He was a really good racer and his package was complete. He was a good-looking guy, he was fit, healthy, he went for it, he ticked all the boxes."

Synge adds: "I remember that last race at Oulton in qualifying he went out and he set a time that was good for pole and then I think Richard Dean was faster and Paul went out again and went quicker, and then I think [Dave] Coyne was out and went quicker, and every time somebody went quicker Paul would go back and go faster."

Barrichello in British F3: it's not how you start...

The 1991 British Formula 3 championship was won by a name which would become familiar: Rubens Barrichello, then 19 years old.

His talent was obvious to his West Surrey Racing boss Dick Bennetts. "Very impressive," he recalls to Motorsport News, "he had nine pole positions. He was a very talented young lad and knew what he wanted.

"[We] were three times at Thruxton that year; he was on pole every time, 1m10.6 seconds, he did the same lap time all three times."

But Barrichello had a problem. "Getting off the startline, every time he was on pole he'd never ever come round leading," Bennetts continues. "He stalled from pole in race one, that was another highlight!

"He was [also] cautious on cold tyres. Sometimes he'd come round in fifth place, sixth place, making life hard for himself."

And compounding Rubinho's problem was his also-familiar-in-time championship foe David Coulthard, who was like Barrichello in reverse with so-so qualifying compensated by scintillating starts and opening stints.

For a time the title therefore looked like Coulthard's, but a late run got the championship back Barrichello's way. Not though before a last-round scare.

"On the final round [at Thruxton] he come round in about 10th place, I thought this is it, we've lost the championship," Bennetts adds. "But he just made his way carefully up through and David lost his front wing down at the complex.

"He was good [at racecraft], he chose his moments, didn't get involved in accidents much at all. All in all a very good year."

Talented Barrichello won the British F3 crown, but had a problem along the way...

For much of the year it looked like Coulthard's starts would take him to the F3 title

DIFFERENT STROKES

After the global unification of touring car racing in the 1980s, the category was splitting itself apart again as 1991 dawned. **David Addison** looks at the scene

Former Mercedes racer Frank Biela won the DTM and ITR Cup for Audi as the German series soared in popularity

If Group A had unified continents in touring car racing, its demise fractured the category once more.

Germany, which had only really started a touring car series in 1984, became the leader with big names, exciting cars and a show-business attitude, Australia persevered with Group A and the UK dispensed with over two-litre cars and became a single-class category for the first time. With other national championships adopting their own rules and formats, commonality there was not.

The German Touring Car Championship, the DTM (Deutsche Tourenwagen Meisterschaft) was Top Dog. Manufacturer money poured in from Mercedes, Opel, BMW and Audi and with them came star names, with reigning champion Hans-Joachim Stuck heading the Audi camp in one of the 440bhp V8 quattros, with fellow Audi man Frank Biela taking the title. BMW boasted cars for British touring car ace Steve Soper who was joined by former F1 racer Johnny Cecotto, plus touring car legend Armin Hahne. Mercedes was headed by another master of the art, Klaus Ludwig, while Kurt Thiim, ex-F1 racer Jacques Laffite and Bernd Schneider crewed some of the other cars. A young Michael Schumacher was one of the drivers that Mercedes put in a car for a brief stint, as part of its young driver programme. Stuck looked to be on course for the title until a fuel feed problem hit and Biela triumphed.

The DTM was the first series to engineer close racing by all sorts of means. Welcoming manufacturer money was all well and good but that alone wouldn't make exciting racing,

"Money poured into the DTM with star names"

especially with the Audi's 440bhp (or more…) taking on BMW whose M3 (now getting on a bit) and Mercedes' 190E generated around 350bhp.

So, the ITR, the category's governing body, hit upon adding weight to the cars depending on where they finished in races. That, at least, helped to level the playing field although outsiders argued that it made it less of a pure form of racing. Maybe so, but the 125,000 people that watched Thiim and Stuckie win at Norisring cared not: the cars were spectacular, the drivers were stars and the racing was top drawer. What was not to love?

Indeed, so popular was it becoming that one outsider wanted a slice. Enterprising Donington promoter Robert Fearnall wanted the cars to come to his circuit and a deal was struck with the ITR to come up with a two-event extra competition, the ITR Cup that would run at Brno in Czechoslovakia and then Donington in late October. British fans hadn't seen anything like it and while the UK's touring car scene was growing, it was nothing like this.

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TOURING CARS IN 1991

At the British Grand Prix, John Cleland's Vauxhall heads the pack of BMWs, the sister Cavalier of Jeff Allam and Robb Gravett's Ford Sapphire

The ITR Cup would run for several seasons, on and off, before the ITR scrapped the idea of a national series going out of its homeland and became the ITC, the International Touring Car series. That is a story for another time.

While Germany, with her 2.5-litre engine limit, was making a path of her own, the British Touring Car Championship was building nicely. Under promoter TOCA, headed by no-nonsense Australian Alan Gow, the keys were: to reduce the ability for tail-enders in small-engined cars to win titles but not races; and to exploit the fleet car market. Two-litre rep-mobiles were selling like hot cakes and a sporting image would help sales further. With a two-litre engine, the BMW M3 was still a popular and proven car, with Vic Lee Motorsport running a Listerine-backed car for moustachioed Will Hoy. He took the crown by winning the opening two races then winning just once more as he banked points. A Mobil-backed, Prodrive-run works team for Jonathan Palmer and Tim Sugden didn't generate the expected results: Sugden, quick certainly, only got a part season anyway as he was replaced by Steve Soper when his DTM dates allowed, and Palmer may have come with F1 on his CV but didn't gel with touring cars and was involved an a celebrated incident at Snetterton when he clumsily collided with formidable Swedish lady Nettan Lindgren. Lindgren nearly wrenched Palmer's door off its hinges as she gave vent to her feelings. Palmer, remembering his medical training and what happens when limbs are torn from bodies, sat tight…

Against the VLM and Prodrive BMW teams came an impressive Toyota assault from Andy Rouse, for whom Gow had first worked when he came to the UK. It took Rouse a little while to dial rear-wheel drive out of his system but his car was quick in a straight line and became a bigger factor in the second half of the year, while Vauxhall committed to the series with a brace of Cavaliers for 1989 champion John

"Cleland won more races than anyone"

Three wins gave Will Hoy the BTCC crown for Vic Lee's team in the ubiquitous BMW M3

TOURING CARS IN 1991

Mercedes junior Michael Schumacher was an occasional DTM racer

Cleland and established touring car star Jeff Allam. Cleland won more races than anyone else, but tyre dramas often let him down as a war broke out between Yokohama, Dunlop and Pirelli. Yokohama won the war with VLM and Hoy.

The 1991 season also showed the first move towards the current multi-race format as Donington in July ran the first double-header event, races back-to-back with repair time. The idea was a success, even if race two was halted by an oil spillage and a multi-car accident, and Andy Rouse scooped both wins.

As the manufacturers put money in, so came more names to the grid. Lee's team ran a second BMW squad for Labatt's, continuing its relationship with Tim Harvey and Laurence Bristow, while Kieth Odor and Julian Bailey teamed up for Nissan, the Primeras run by Kieth's father Jan through his Janspeed concern. John Maguire Racing picked up a deal to run a rather breathless Mitsubishi Lancer for Mark Hales before it as replaced by a Galant, while other privateers tried their won path, such as MG-turned Ford Sierra racer Grahame Davis who ran a Rover 216GTi, Dennis Leech who took the turbo off his Sierra but the concept wasn't a success, and silhouette star Jeff Wilson who ran an under-funded Vauxhall Belmont. The car didn't achieve much other than notoriety for rolling at Silverstone. The reigning champion, Robb Gravett, tried to run a Sierra Sapphire but, without turbo power, the initiative didn't work and Andrew Mackenzie tried a Peugeot 405. It all proved that the championship was attractive enough for privateers to try their hand once again and although some would fall by the wayside, the stalwarts remained on the grid as the BTCC became the unofficial European championship with in a few years. Super Touring, as the regulations were known, was certainly the future.

In the present, Italy ran a two-class system split at two-litres in which Alfa Romeo 75s took on BMW M3s. Serial title winner Roberto Ravaglia took the ITCC crown, to add to European and World titles, while Giorgio Francia upheld Alfa Romeo's honour. Over in France it was the Audi 80 quattro that was the car to beat as Xavier Lapeyre beat team-mate Marc Sourd to the crown, but the entry levels were low and the future of the championship was under review.

Down Under, the Australian Touring Car Championship struggled. With Australia in an economic downturn, and uncertainty about the future of the international scene, entries were low with just 11 cars gracing the Wanneroo grid. The 640bhp Nissan Skyline of Jim Richards was the car to beat, the Kiwi winning four races and the sister car of Mark Skaife taking

"The ATCC struggled with the economy"

Blast off at Oulton Park with the two-litre rules attracting Vauxhall, Toyota and Ford

DTM at Donington as the ITR Cup blasts to Redgate. Steve Soper's Bigazzi-run BMW M3 leads but Frank Biela's Audi won both races

three. Tony Longhurst returned to BMW to drive a Frank Gardner-run, Benson & Hedges-backed M3 and picked up two wins when the Nissans, dubbed Godzilla, faltered. For Holden and Ford fans there was little to cheer and the four-wheel-drive Nissan was in danger of scaring off the opposition. Already plans were afoot to change the ATCC but a further year of transition was needed. For Richards and Skaife, they not only finished one-two in the ATCC, but teamed up to win the Toohey's 1000 at Bathurst as well, with Win Percy and Allan Grice taking second for Holden…a lap down. The Nissan was just too fast.

While 1991 may have proved a year of fragmented rule sets across the globe, the success of Super Touring would lead to unification as the decade progressed. There would, however, be a few bumps in the road, but as the increasing crowd numbers underlined, touring car racing was as popular as ever.

Robb Gravett's Ford Sapphire spins at Silverstone in a tough season

John Cleland and Steve Soper run together with reigning champion Robb Gravett behind

Jeff Wilson's BTCC Vauxhall Belmont was the only such example

Nissan Skylines ruled Down Under

Shell
Mobil Super Plus
66
Mobil
Super Plus
tech·speed·racing
PIRELLI
tech·speed·racing

BIG PICTURE

Life's a beach for the British touring car runners

It is July 1991 and the second race of the day for the British Touring Car Championship at Donington Park. Nick Whale's BMW M3 has lunched its engine half a lap before the leaders arrive on the scene. Whale's team-mate Nick Baird is the first to hit Whale's oil but continues after a spin. The others are less fortunate: Mark Hales ploughs into the gravel, missing Whale's stranded car before the leaders arrive. Andy Rouse just gets through but second-placed Jeff Allam hits Whale's car amidships with his team-mate John Cleland piling in as well. Ray Bellm's BMW M3 goes off as well and a long delay ensues under the red flag.

A CAR FOR ALL SEASONS

The BMW M3 was winning championships in 1991. It won them before and it won them after. It was a car with a strike rate like no other, says **David Addison**

With a 2.5-litre engine, the BMW M3 enjoyed success in the DTM

Plenty of private teams ran the M3 in the BTCC with varying results!

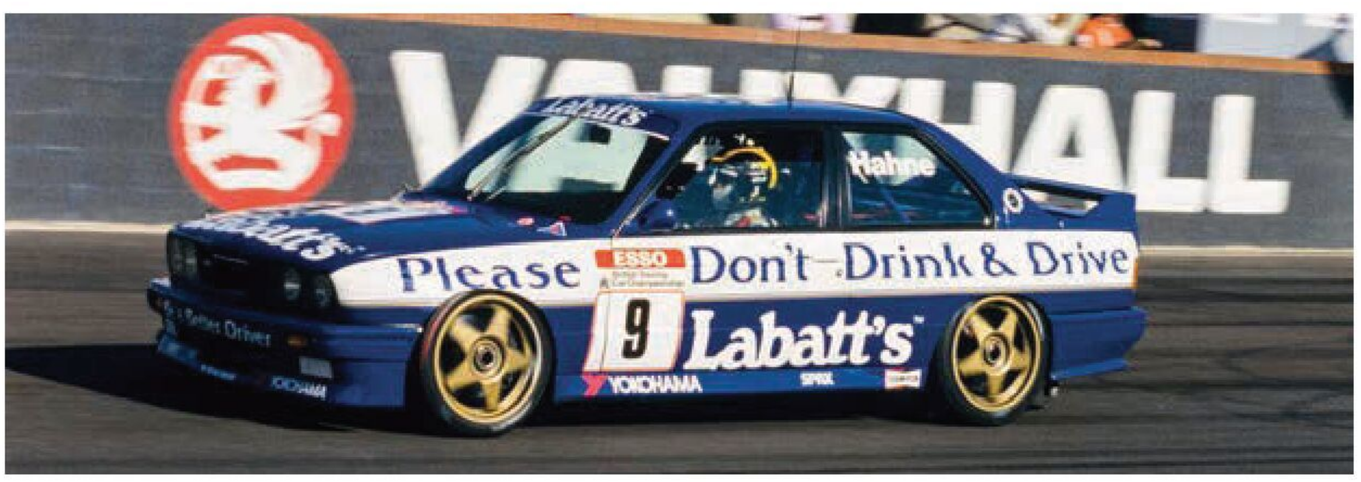
A season, maybe two. Very few cars have the longevity not to mention the global success as the BMW M3. Launched in the late 1980s it was winning into the early 1990s as well. Whether it was as a manufacturer team or in the hands of hundreds of private squads, the M3 was successful.

Its history dates back to 1985 when BMW head Eberhard von Kuenheim paid a visit to the firm's motorsport department in Munich, headed by Paul Rosche, who had overseen the company's successes as an engine supplier in Formula 2 and latterly Formula 1 for Brabham. "We need," Kuenheim reportedly said as he left, "a sporty engine for the 3 Series."

The four-cylinder two-litre 3-Series engine was increased to a 2.3-litre powerplant and used four-valve engineering. It was kept to a four-cylinder engine, rather than six, as the larger engine started to vibrate much sooner than the smaller one, so the BMW engineers managed to wring 10,000 rpm out of the smaller block.

According to Rosche, work started immediately. With the six-cylinder engine having the same cylinder gap as the four- cylinder, two combustion chambers were cut off and a panel bolted over the hole on the rear side, and the engine that had made the BMW M1 so good and transformed the venerable M635CSi now had a four-cylinder offshoot made, amazingly, in less than two weeks. With 300bhp on

BMW to the fore as the DTM pack heads into the first corner at the Belgian Zolder circuit



German star Armin Hahne was a one-off visitor to the two-litre BTCC in a VLM-run car

M3s came with a variety of backers

tap from the 2.3-litre engine, the 960kg car was an instant hit.

The car's first major race was the 1987 World Touring Car Championship race at Monza. It was a top-six lockout for the little Bimmers, headed home by the CiBiEmme-tended car of Johnny Cecotto/Riccardo Patrese, until, with the cars now in the teams' transporters, the scrutineers asked for another look at the cars. Somehow, they had got wind of the difference in roof thickness between a Hungarian team's car (converted from a road car) and the BMW Motorsport-provided cars. Their roof panelling was deemed to be too thin, and hence the first six cars were all excluded.

With the roof drama sorted, the results flowed. It was Roberto Ravaglia who took the first WTCC title, the only one as an endurance championship, before he won the European title in an M3 the year after. The 1987 DTM title fell to the M3 as well with Eric van der Poele taking the crown. In the UK, the M3 took an outright win at Donington in 1987, BMW dealer Frank Sytner putting one over the more powerful Ford Sierra RS500s and a year later Sytner took the BTCC title, fending off his Prodrive team-mate Mike Smith to win Class B as well as the overall crown, Sytner having a tougher time the following season to keep pace with James Weaver. Over in Germany, serial title collector Ravaglia won the DTM while the M3 was already a hit Down Under with Jim Richards having won the Australian Touring Car Championship in 1987. All of this was with a variety of engine sizes: the 2.3-litre powerplant in mainstream Group A championships, while over in Germany the DTM regulations allowed the cars to run with a 2.5-litre engine

"We need a sporty engine"

In 1991, the BTCC moved to its first season as a single-class championship and with an upper limit of two litres, the M3 was the chosen weapon for a number of teams. Vic Lee Motorsport ran the Listerine/Securicor car for Will Hoy and won the championship. It wasn't finished yet: more race wins came in Group N racing with the Snetterton 24 Hours being one such success (for Mike Jordan, Mike Burtt, Charlie Cox and John Morrison) plus four Nurburgring 24 Hour wins. Club racing successes would fill another magazine…

What made the M3 so good was that it was a turn-key racer that almost every team could run. Fast, nimble, reliable and simple: it had it all. For season after season.

Marc Goossens won the Formula Ford Festival in his works Van Diemen as well as the British Formula Ford crown

VAUXHALL v FORD v RENAULT

The look of national racing in the UK was changing in 1991. **Paul Lawrence** looks back at the season

Formula Vauxhall Junior launched in 1991. Dario Franchitti heads the pack at Thruxton at the end of the opening season

Matt Neal took on the might of the Ford Sierra Cosworths in the Esso Superlube Saloon Car Championship for Group N racers

Three decades ago national racing was peppered with manufacturer-backed race championships and that didn't only apply in the manufacturer heartland of tip-top racing.

Renault, Vauxhall and Ford were all heavily invested in single-seater categories, with Ford and Renault promoting mixed chassis competition while Vauxhall took the spec engine and chassis route for its Formula Vauxhall Lotus Championship and the new-for-1991 Formula Vauxhall Junior category, which was aimed squarely at those stepping up from karting.

Today, four competing single-seater categories for ambitious young lions would be unsustainable, but back then the UK was still a destination of choice for well-funded youngsters from all over the world to come and make their name. Drivers from mainland Europe, South America and Australia arrived in the cold and wet UK in March ahead of a season in their category of choice.

By the time the season was done, the big winners were Marc Goossens (Formula Ford), Bobby Verdon-Roe (Formula Renault), Kelvin Burt (Formula Vauxhall Lotus) and Dario Franchitti (Formula Vauxhall Junior). All were fine young racers but destined for very divergent career trajectories.

Away from motor racing, 1991 had its ups and downs as John Major led the country into the final decade of the millennium and out of a decade of Thatcherism. It was the year in which the US invaded Iraq and the year when Tim Berners-Lee created the world's first website. It was the year when Anthony Hopkins did no good for the sale of liver with his performance in The Silence of the Lambs, Bryan Adams sat at number one in the pop charts for what seemed like forever and it was the year that claimed the prodigious talent of Freddie Mercury.

Sadly, tragedy was not restricted to music stars. In June, Andy Colson died at Oulton Park's Knickerbrook corner during testing for a Formula Renault race. With Paul Warwick's death (see page 64) a month later, two bright young lives had been lost and the need for change to the incredibly fast corner prompted the creation of what we now know as the Hislop's chicane. There was also media coverage of the danger of the corner, much written by Mihir Bose in The Sunday Times, which dedicated space to the darker side of the sport rather than the positives.

Colson had been chasing the Formula Renault championship on a shoestring at the time of his death and that series was busy going head-to-head with Formula Vauxhall Lotus in the race to be the UK's preferred stepping stone into Formula 3.

Formula Vauxhall Lotus, which had been running since 1988, drew a class field and it was young charger Kelvin Burt who emerged as a worthy champion over fellow junior Formula Ford graduate Warren Hughes, while Piers Hunnisett completed the overall podium. For the 1991 season, Vauxhall increased its investment in the junior single-seater arena by adding Formula Vauxhall Junior to the mix. With slick tyres but no wings, the class mated an eight-valve 1600cc Vauxhall Nova engine to a standard Van Diemen chassis.

"FVJ was aimed at those from karting"

Bobby Verdon-Roe was Formula Renault champion in a field that grew in quality and quantity

Vauxhall Junior was the brainchild of former rally co-driver Mike Nicholson, then the Vauxhall motorsport manager, in conjunction with Ralph Firman at Van Diemen and John Kirkpatrick at the Jim Russell Racing School and it brought a gaggle of promising youngsters into some tremendously fierce competition. With no wings to spoil the fun, the races were often slipstreaming thrillers and the grid, though never overflowing with quantity, always had plenty of quality.

FVJ ran for a decade before Vauxhall finally pulled the financial plug and the inaugural champion was young Scot Dario Franchitti, who started to make a real name for himself with some mighty performances. Still 17 years old when the season started, Franchitti was clearly a big talent in the making as three Indy 500 victories would later underline. Franchitti's leading rivals included young Irish racer Kevin McGarrity, David Cuff, Jonny Kane, Freddy van Beuren and David Sonenscher.

"Franchitti was clearly a big talent"

Formula Renault was the preserve of Formula First graduate Bobby Verdon-Roe racing for the Fortec team. BV-R outpaced Adrian Cottrell for the title while the under-rated Ringo Hine completed the championship podium at the expense of a young Jason Plato. While Plato would go on to make a rather large name for himself in the sport, Hine soon returned to the family farm and left motor racing behind him.

Motorcraft was title sponsor for the British Formula Ford Championship and it was Belgian racer Marc Goossens who was top of the tree in his works-run Van Diemen RF91. He took the season-long title by five points from the similar car of rising Australian racer Russell Ingall with Andrew McAuley, the hard-charging Dino Morelli and the much missed Neil Cunningham wrapping up the top five. Goossens put the seal on a fine season by winning the end of season Formula Ford Festival over Warren Hughes, who dropped back from Formula Vauxhall Lotus for the Brands Hatch weekend.

In the regions, the Champion of Oulton Formula Ford 1600 Championship was one of the strongest with the top three of local fliers in the order of Peter Kaye, Graeme Riley and Brian Anderson. Down at Castle Combe, Welshman Nigel Jenkins retained his title in a Reynard 90FF.

Formula First, now in its fourth season, remained the ultimate entry-level category and delivered all sorts of close racing and general mayhem on treaded tyres and no downforce. Oliver Gavin, then 18 years old, was easily the class of the field and was a commanding champion as Mark Redgrave, Glenn Tabor and Anthony Cheshire headed the opposition.

Sportscar racing was rather thinly populated in 1991 as the Thundersports series had withered and died at the end of the 1980s. A brief attempt by the BRDC to run a Group C2 championship folded due to lack of support in 1990 and its British GT offering would not emerge from the ashes until 1993.

However Thundersaloons fared better and it was Pete Stevens in the ex-John Cleland Vauxhall Carlton, which he'd acquired from previous owner Joe Ward, who battled out the 1991 season with the Ford Sierra of Jerry Mahony and Laurence Bristow. It was a fiercely fought battle and ended on a tie-break after each crew took five wins apiece, but it was the Ford that finally took the title by the smallest of margins. The premier sub-BTCC level saloon car series was the

Jerry Mahony moved from the BTCC to Thundersaloons where omnipotent cars did battle in mini-enduro races

popular Group N-specification Esso Superlube Saloon Car Championship in which Matt Neal's Nissan Skyline missed out on the title by a point to Patrick Watts' Peugeot 309 after a season that mixed endurance and sprint races. Kurt Luby's BMW M3 and Graham Churchill's Honda Civic were the other class champions, Luby also winning the Willhire 24 Hours at Snetterton with BTCC racers Ray Bellm and Will Hoy. The BARC continued with Production Saloons, run to a more standard specification, in which the traditional four classes, split on engine size, battled it out, with Michael Woodcock's Ford Sierra Cosworth, Guy Povey's BMW M3 and Brett Darrall's Suzui Swift taking the class titles as Piers Johnson took the outright crown in his Honda Civic.

Over at Castle Combe, the circuit-based Special GT Championship fell to arch enthusiast and evergreen racer Chris Snowdon in his Davrian Mk8, while other sportscar champions from the Clubmans categories were Tony Bridge in the Vauxhall Finance Championship for the 16-valve powered cars with his Mallock Mk29 and Terry Nightingale who took the Sports 1600 title and his Mallock Mk28B. Just to show that time does not change everything, other 1991 race winners included Nigel Greensall and Stuart Kestenbaum who are still racing and winning 30 years later.

Ingliston was Scotland's second circuit and hosted the Vauxhall Junior hotshoes

Sierra and Sapphire Cosworths were numerically strong in Group N

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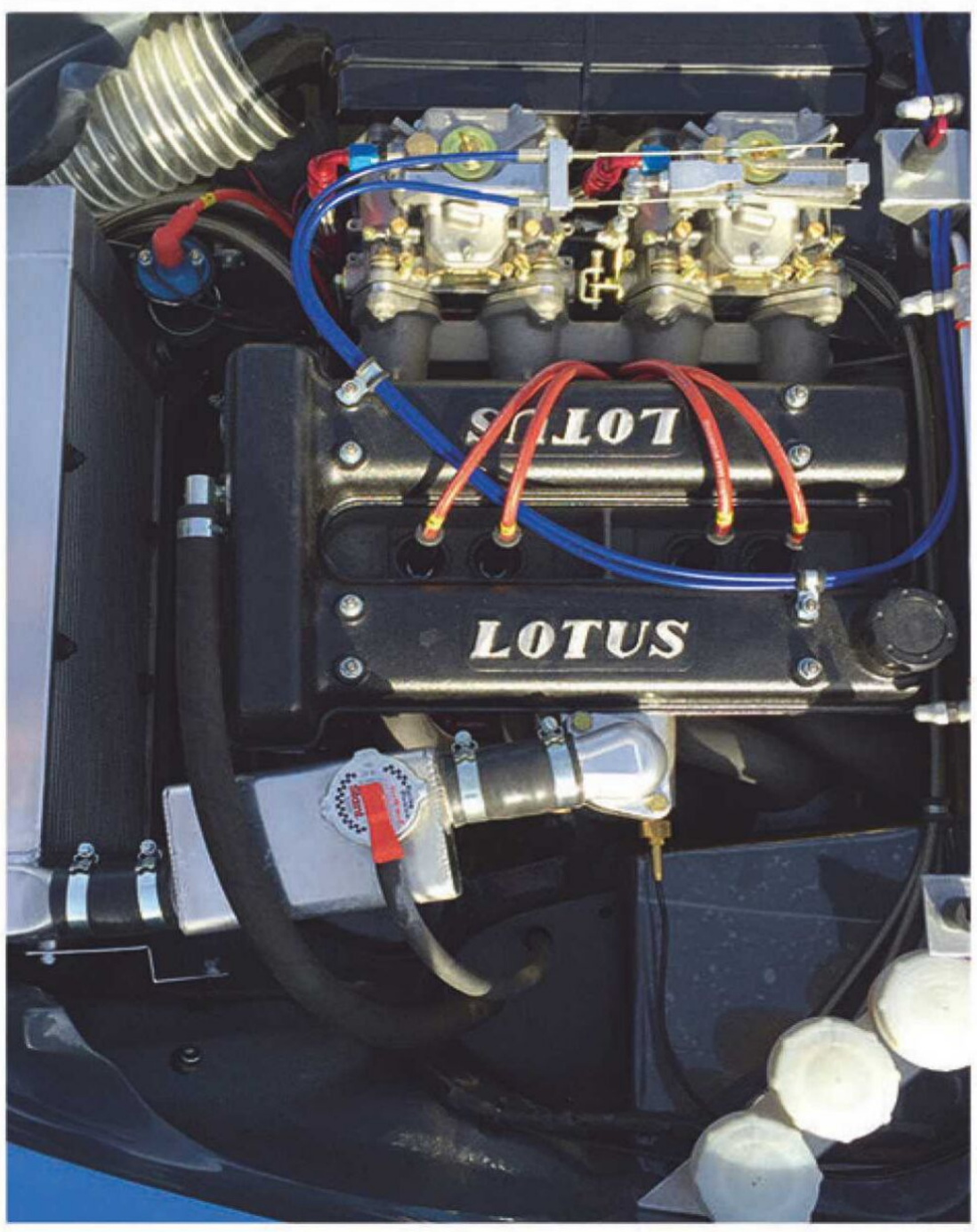

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The Renault Clio replaced the 5 Turbo as the French company's flagship racer and Steve Waudby won the first title

MANUFACTURING INTEREST

As the 1990s dawned, more manufacturers were putting their money into one-make racing, an arena in which they couldn't lose. **Robin Bradford** looks back at the state of play in 1991

A question you have probably never asked yourself: what do the 1990 World Ladies Rally Champion Louise Aitken-Walker, American pop singer Donny Osmond and Falklands hero Simon Weston have in common? Answer: they all drove a celebrity car in a manufacturer-backed one-make circuit-racing championship in 1991.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. First, a short history lesson. One-make racing dates back to the launch of the Mini Se7en Formula in 1966 (Mini Miglia came in 1970), creating a structure for hundreds of club racers to enjoy competing in a car that had already won the British Saloon Car Championship (1961, John Whitmore) and the European Rally Championship (1965, Rauno Aaltonen). While these series were the brainchild of the Mini Se7en Racing Club and not directly supported by BMC, other manufacturers latched on in the early 1970s, most notably Ford and Renault, building relationships with competitors and customers with big-budget marketing programmes.

In 1991, Ford and Renault were still there, but the new

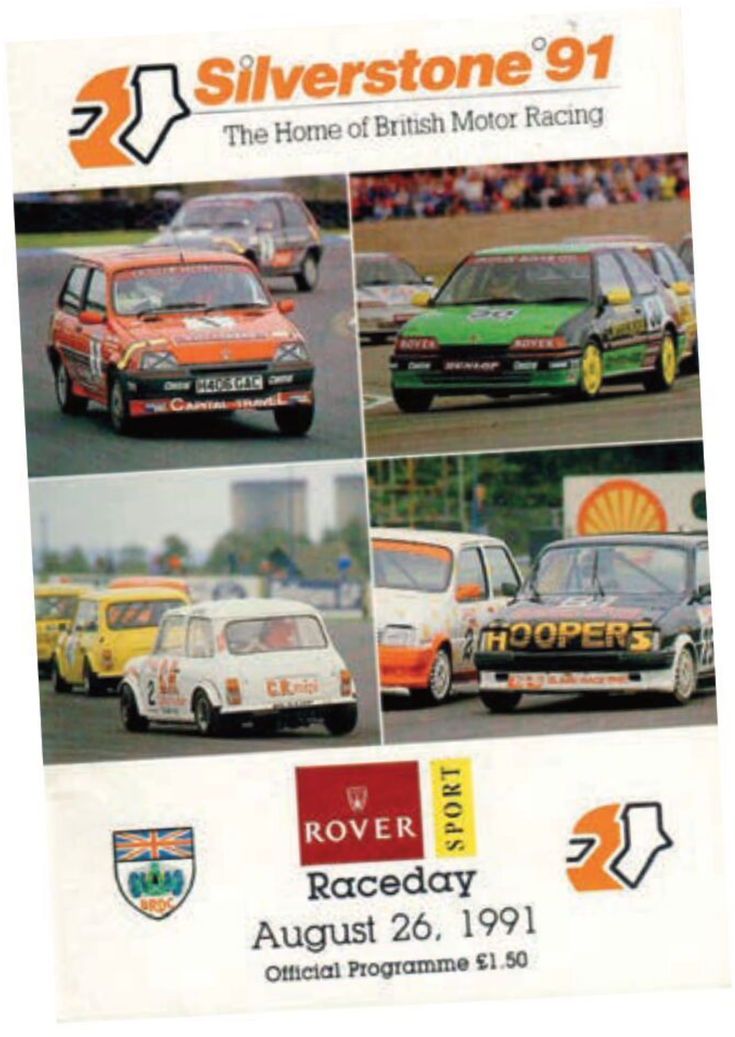
Rover Sport launched its 216 GTI and Dave Loudoun added the crown to his Fiesta and Metro Turbo wins

kid on the block was Rover, at least in name. After a successful decade of Metro racing, the newly formed Rover Sport oversaw the Dunlop Rover GTi Championship, with a healthy prize fund, a road-going version of the 16-valve 216GTi race car for the winner, huge support from the dealer network and grids of 25 or more all season.

Fiesta (1983) and MG Metro Turbo Champion (1987) Dave Loudoun won five of 12 races, picked up maximum points for second behind celebrity driver Slim Borgudd in the opening round and clinched the title two-thirds of the way through the season. With seven national titles under his belt, ex-single-seater racer Ian Taylor finished a rather distant second, beating 1990 Mini Miglia champion Owen Hall by just three points, thanks to finishing one place behind him in the final race. Oh, and it was the Rover 216 celebrity car that was raced by L A-W and Weston, by the way.

The Ford Audio Fiesta Trophy, by now for the XR2i version, also boasted healthy grids, with more than 30 registered runners. But the title race was much harder fought, 1990 runner-up Colin Stancombe duking it out with champion Brian Farminer and reigning champion Ian Briggs until the latter withdrew after an eligibility dispute. The title race went down to the final round at Brands Hatch, the outcome decided on the extra point awarded for fastest lap, which was claimed by Farminer, 0.015s quicker than Stancombe…but only after the first driver to be awarded the point, Karl Jones, was excluded for an incident with Farminer. Jones finished third at year end.

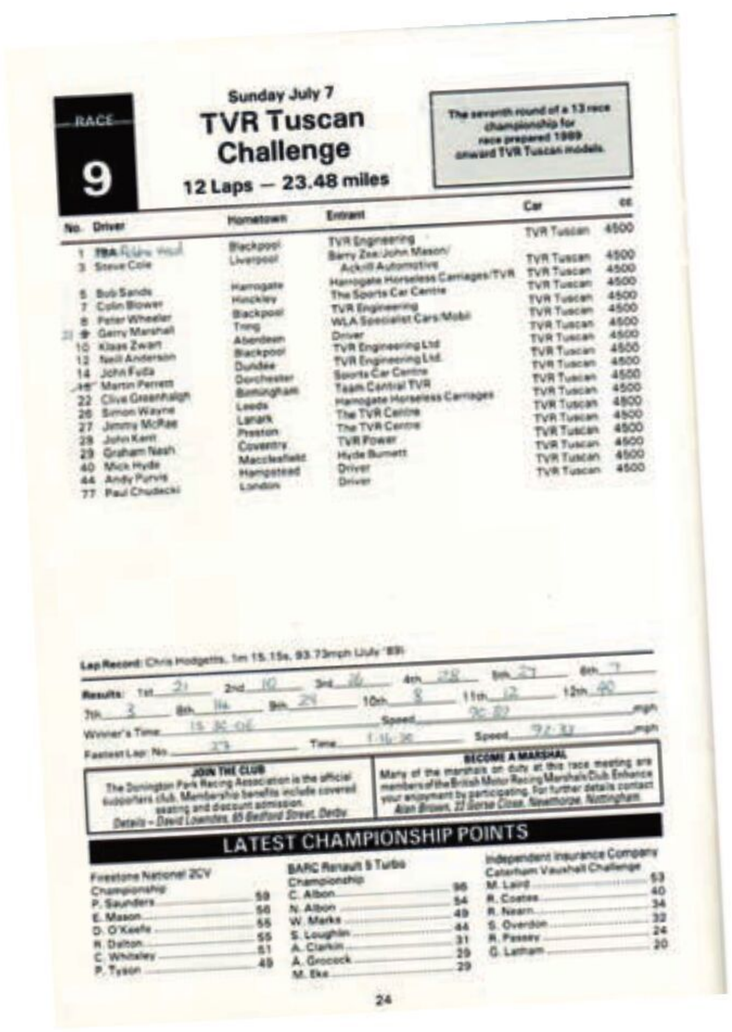
Jones had also raced in the Renault Clio Elf UK Cup in the first half of the season, even winning one round, but was not part of the title fight as Renault moved to the new 16-valve Clio for its principal series. Another championship with a healthy prize fund and well-subscribed grids (24 drivers scored points), it was a real season of two halves. Harlow Motorsport's Steve Waudby won the opening round and was on the podium for three of the next four races, but Mike Mills of Gerard Motorsport was leading by 10 points heading for his and his team's home round at Donington Park. Mills won, but a technical protest from the rival team resulted in his exclusion and, while Waudby only finished eighth, it was the turning point of the campaign. So closely matched were they that Mills and Waudby clocked



Rover Sport was enthusiastic backer

Mighty TVR Tuscans entertained whatever the weather

Mazda's MX-5 UK Cup had smaller entries but still delivered close racing



RACE 9

Sunday July 7

TVR Tuscan Challenge

12 Laps — 23.48 miles

The seventh round of a 13 race championship for race prepared 1989 onward TVR Tuscan models.

No.	Driver	Hometown	Entrant	Car	cc
1	TBA		TVR Engineering	TVR Tuscan	4500
3	Steve Cole	Blackpool Liverpool	Barry Zee/John Mason/ Ackrill Automotive	TVR Tuscan	4500
5	Bob Sands	Harrogate	Harrogate Horseless Carriages/TVR	TVR Tuscan	4500
7	Colin Blower	Hinckley	The Sports Car Centre	TVR Tuscan	4500
8	Peter Wheeler	Blackpool	TVR Engineering	TVR Tuscan	4500
9	Gerry Marshall	Tring	WLA Specialist Cars/Mobil	TVR Tuscan	4500
10	Klaas Zwart	Aberdeen	Driver	TVR Tuscan	4500
12	Neil Anderson	Blackpool	TVR Engineering Ltd	TVR Tuscan	4500
14	John Fyda	Dundee	TVR Engineering Ltd.	TVR Tuscan	4500
16	Martin Perrett	Dorchester	Sports Car Centre	TVR Tuscan	4500
22	Clive Greenhalgh	Bonnington	Team Central TVR	TVR Tuscan	4500
26	Simon Wayne	Leeds	Harrogate Horseless Carriages	TVR Tuscan	4500
27	Jimmy McRae	Lanark	The TVR Centre	TVR Tuscan	4500
28	John Kent	Preston	The TVR Centre	TVR Tuscan	4500
29	Graham Nash	Coventry	TVR Power	TVR Tuscan	4500
40	Mick Hyde	Macclesfield	Hyde Burnett	TVR Tuscan	4500
44	Andy Purvis	Hampstead	Driver	TVR Tuscan	4500
77	Paul Chudecki	London	Driver		

Lap Record: Chris Hodgetts, 1m 15.15s, 93.73mph (July '89)

Results: 1st 21, 2nd 10, 3rd 26, 4th 28, 5th 27, 6th 7, 7th 3, 8th 14, 9th 29, 10th 8, 11th 12, 12th 40

Winner's Time: 15 30 06 Speed 90.89 mph

Fastest Lap: No. 27 Time 1 16 36 Speed 92.32 mph

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Details – David Lisemble, 85 Bedford Street, Derby

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Many of the marshals on duty at this race meeting are members of the British Motor Racing Marshals Club. Enhance your enjoyment by participating. For further details contact Alan Brown, 27 Borrie Close, Newthorpe, Nottingham

LATEST CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

Firestone National 2CV Championship

P. Saunders	59
E. Mason	56
D. O'Keefe	55
N. Dalton	55
C. Whiteley	51
P. Tyson	49

BARC Renault 5 Turbo Championship

C. Albon	96
N. Albon	54
W. Marks	49
S. Loughlin	44
A. Clarkin	31
A. Grocock	29
M. Eke	29

Independent Insurance Company Caterham Vauxhall Challenge

M. Laird	53
R. Coates	40
R. Nearn	34
S. Overdon	32
R. Passey	24
G. Latham	20

24

Familiar names graced TVR grid

identical fastest laps. Mills won two further races to Waudby's three, losing the title by four points, with David Kay not far adrift in third.

Just as Karl Jones hopped back and forth from Fiesta to Clio, so did Andy Ackerley between Clio and the Honda CRX Challenge, in which he'd finished runner-up in 1990. Now in its fourth and last season, as Honda was about to switch its marketing efforts to the Civic VTec in production saloons, the CRX series was still popular, around half the 25-plus grid being newcomers, replacing the likes of 1990 runner-up Loudoun. While Ackerley's best Clio result was fourth, he fair shone in the CRX, winning eight of 12 races to finish the year nearly 40 points clear of Bill Gibson, who shared a blanket of just eight points with Rick Shortle and Russell Grady.

It was also to be the last year of the Mazda MX-5 UK Cup, as the 20-plus grids of 1990 were halved at the start of the season and occasionally dwindled to single figures. While the dealer network had supported season one with enthusiasm, the slightly-modified MX-5s still had a VIN (vehicle identification number), unlike the purpose-built shells in many other one-make series, so could easily revert to road cars. After Patrick Watts took the 1990 UK Cup in dominant form to add to his Mini Se7en and Honda CRX titles, he switched to production saloons, leaving the field wide open. Runner-up Mark Lemmer was one of four different winners in the first four rounds of 1991, then he left for single-seaters. While returnees Tony Broom and Chris Longmore also won, it was former Fiesta and Metro racer Robin Parsons who emerged champion, winning seven of 11 races, with a tie-

Hayden Measham explores Donington's grass as he battles with Mark Fish

break needed to split second and third places between Kevin Templeman and David Katz. Silverstone Racing School instructor Katz had tutored Osmond prior to his guest appearance in the final round.

While the open-topped Mazdas were in their final season, other sportscar programmes would survive longer, such as Caterham, which had enjoyed huge competitor support for its Super Seven classes, and now introduced the Caterham Vauxhall Series. Magnus Laird (later to run Caterham's motorsport programme) was dominant in its first year, winning from Roberts Coates and Nairn, while the Super Sevens class champions were Jonathan Milicevic, Howard Cramer and Bart Hayden, who also won the overall title.

Porsche chose 1991 for a shake-up of the status quo, too. Its long-running BF Goodrich Production series was split in to the Castrol Porsche Supercup (classes A & B) and a Frank Shorter Sportswear-supported club series, in which classes C & D of the former series became classes A & B, all of which, combined with the continuing Autofarm series for modified cars in four divisions, made for a rather confused picture.

The racing was good though, and the results close: in the Supercup,

"Rover Sport offered a prize fund"

Class B winner David Warnock survived a three-way tie-break at year end to win the overall title from the top two in Class A, Brian Robinson and Tony Dron. Multiple Porsche champion Mike Jordan won the club series title overall, and in class, by just four points from Hugh Price, while John Bussell was the Class B champion. Norman McRoberts won the modified championship from Class 2, the other divisions won by Bob Watson (3), Valentine Lindsay (4) and John Greasley (1), who had by far the fastest car on the grid, but rarely had enough opposition to score maximum class points.

In its third season, tweaks to the points and prize money system had brought renewed vigour to the TVR Tuscan Challenge and another close year-long contest, resolved in the final round at Oulton Park. Steve Cole, who had arguably spent more time

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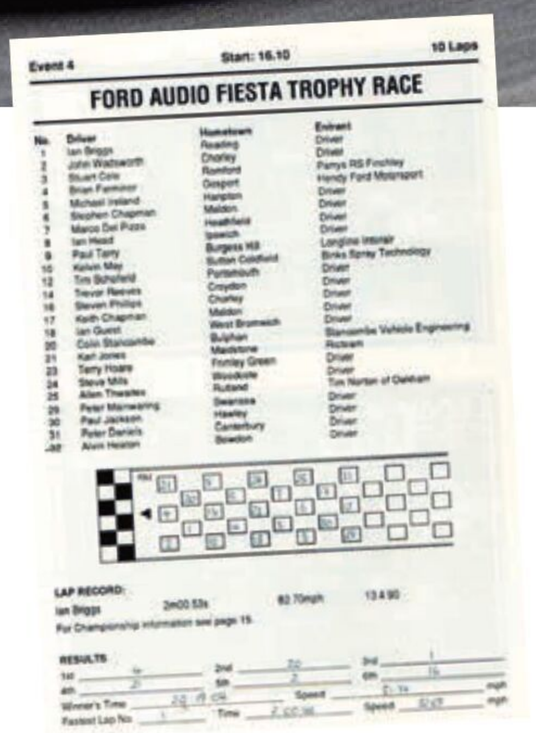
ONE MAKE 1991

Brian Farminer shone in Fiestas

racing TVRs than anyone else, emerged champion ahead of Colin Blower and Gerry Marshall, just 12 points covering the three after a year of fire-breathing sideways motoring.

With the introduction of new models by Renault and Rover, the championships they replaced were down-graded. Brothers Craig and Nigel Albon dominated the BARC Renault 5 Turbo series, finishing the year in alphabetical order, while Peter Baldwin, who had missed only one Metro race in a decade, beat Steve Wilson to the chequered flag at Silverstone (and the title) as what was now called the Unipart Metro Club Challenge went down to the wire. Unipart also continued support of the Mini, with Bill Sollis and Myk Cable respectively the Seven and Miglia champions.

While we have dealt with the major manufacturer-supported series here, the one-make scene also encompassed well-supported club championships for Alfa Romeos, Austin-Healeys, Citroen 2CVs, Ferraris, Jaguars, MGs, Morgans and Triumphs so there was something for (almost) everyone. M



Event 4 — Start: 16.10 — 10 Laps

FORD AUDIO FIESTA TROPHY RACE

No.	Driver	Hometown	Entrant
1	Ian Briggs	Reading	Driver
2	John Wadsworth	Chorley	Driver
3	Stuart Cole	Romford	Pamys RS Finchley
4	Brian Farminer	Gosport	Hendy Ford Motorsport
5	Michael Ireland	Hampton	Driver
6	Stephen Chapman	Maldon	Driver
7	Marco Del Pizzo	Heathfield	Driver
8	Ian Head	Ipswich	Driver
9	Paul Tarry	Burgess Hill	Longline Interior
10	Kelvin May	Sutton Coldfield	Binks Spray Technology
12	Tim Schofield	Portsmouth	Driver
14	Trevor Reeves	Croydon	Driver
16	Steven Phillips	Chorley	Driver
17	Keith Chapman	Maldon	Driver
18	Ian Guest	West Bromwich	Driver
20	Colin Stancombe	Bulphan	Stancombe Vehicle Engineering
21	Karl Jones	Maidstone	Richavin
23	Terry Hoare	Frimley Green	Driver
24	Steve Mills	Woodside	Driver
25	Allen Thwaites	Rutland	Tim Norton of Oakham
29	Peter Manwaring	Swansea	Driver
30	Paul Jackson	Hawley	Driver
31	Peter Daniels	Canterbury	Driver
-02	Alvin Heaton	Bowdon	Driver

LAP RECORD: Ian Briggs 2m00.53s 82.70mph 134.90

For Championship information see page 15

RESULTS

Fiesta series was competitive

"There was something for everyone"

Popular Mini 7 Racing Club championships thrilled fans

BIG PICTURE

Talent spotting in British F3

Round three of the 1991 British F3 Championship heads towards Donington's Redgate Corner, headed by polesitter Rickard Rydell (TOM'S-Toyota), the winner of the opening round. To his left (5) is David Coulthard (Ralt RT35-Mugen Honda) who would go on to win his first F3 race while behind them round-two winner Rubens Barrichello (Ralt RT35-Mugen Honda) tries the outside line against team-mate Jordi Gene. Also in the queue are Oswaldo Negri (4), Gil de Ferran (12), Steve Robertson (3) and Hideki Noda (8). It was Coulthard's race but Barrichello's season.

Shell
Shell
Shell

SCHANCHE BOUNCES BACK

International rallycross was booming in 1991 with Group B Supercars headlining the sport. **Mike Holder** looks back at the season

Martin Schanche won the European Rallycross Championship but was pushed hard by Will Gollop

The rallycross scene was in good health as 1991 dawned. Europe was delivering good grids and close racing in its two divisions and there was enough variety in the UK to give fans excitement.

The European Rallycross Championship was split into Group A and Group B classes in effect, with Kenneth Hansen starting as favourite having won the previous two seasons' titles while Matti Alamaki had won the Group B fight in 1990 in his Peugeot 205 T16. However, the Finn elected to sit out the season allowing the title fight to play out between Will Gollop's MG Metro 6R4 and the evergreen Martin Schanche in his Ford RS200. The Norwegian was looking for a fifth title.

However, Schanche's season started badly when he rolled the Ford on day one at Portugal's Lousada circuit. He bounced back by winning the final and then the following two rounds in Austria at Melk and at Finland's Hameenlinna circuit. Absent from Finland was Brit Will Gollop who skipped the event to make changes to his MG Metro 6R4 BiTurbo, the G-Tech driver rejoining the series in France. There, Schanche made a poor start for the final and dropped to fourth, eventually battling up to second, but as he did so, Gollop took the win. Norwegian Schanche was so grumpy that he missed the presentations and later claimed that the car had a broken diff. Whether that were true or not mattered little: he had been defeated.

"Schanche rolled on day one"

The next stop was Mondello Park in Ireland where Gollop again triumphed having nipped past Schanche exiting the first corner in the restarted final. He led all the way, Schanche breathing down his neck, but Schanche had worked himself into a rage at the defeat and stormed straight to the paddock instead of parc ferme. For that he was excluded and Gollop was looking like a greater threat for the title.

At Holjes, Gollop led but suffered a loss of power after a build up of heat in the engine bay caused the exhaust manifolds to crack. Schanche caught him and dived past for the lead, but the pass came in a yellow flag zone. Officials disqualified him even before the race was over, and so Gollop made it three wins in a row and jointly led the title race with Schanche.

Gollop won again in Belgium although Schanche led the final at Maasmechelen until he ran slightly wide starting the last lap. Side by side

As the British Rallycross Grand Prix proved there was variety aplenty in the UK and Europe

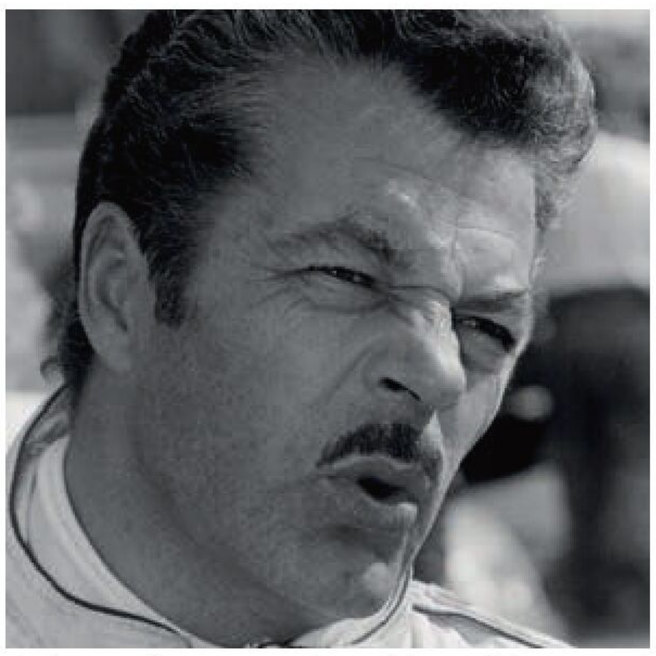
they ran, Gollop moving ahead and Schanche running so wide that he ended in the gravel trap. Advantage Gollop.

Schanche bounced back to dominate the Dutch round at Valkenswaard and won again on home turf at Lyngas. Advantage Schanche. Next up was Lydden, Gollop's home circuit, but Will had a huge shunt on the opening lap when he ran wide exiting Chessons Drift while trying to pass Pat Doran (Ford RS200) and was collected by Gary Baker's Ford as he bounced back on to the circuit. Schanche won the race and the title with a round to spare, but he won the last event in Estering as well.

Kenneth Hansen was the class of the Group A Division 1 field, winning seven times on his way to the crown, with the BMW M3 of Ludvig Hunsbedt and the Sierras of Bjorn Skogstad and Tom Einar Aserud bagging a win each.

Gollop led the annual British Rallycross Grand Prix at Brands Hatch only for late race contact with Pat Doran to bundle him into the Druids barriers and Doran claimed the win, but Will did have the consolation of winning the British Championship. Gollop didn't intend to do the whole season but additional funding allowed him to target the title. Other frontrunners were Doran, Steve Palmer (MG Metro 6R4) and John Moloney (MG Metro 6R4), while Barry Squibb took a win in his Ford Escort.

With Roger Newbould (Renault 5) winning Formula B after a season-long battle with Tony Bardy, Rallycross looked to be in good health at the end of the season.



Schanche remained loyal to Ford

Kenneth Hansen won Group A

Hansen took a third Division 1 title in two-wheel-drive Sierra

NEVER A DULL MOMENT ON THE OVALS

In a year that featured one of the most popular National Hot Rod World Final wins ever, perhaps the most dramatic finish of all time to the BriSCA F1 main event, and the start of an unprecedented dominance in Formula 2, there was plenty to talk about for oval racing fans in 1991. **Graham Brown** relives the events of 30 years ago

John Lund won the BriSCA F1 World crown from 20th on the grid

Young gun Roger Peck took the National Hot Rod World title

Although National Hot Rod racing was still recovering from a loss of drivers to the rival Northampton-based Intersaloons, there was still a lot of very competitive racing going on. To put that into perspective, they raced no fewer than 48 meetings by the time Steve Skitmore claimed the 1990-91 points championship by a scant five points from Steve Burgess.

The class was also in a transitional phase regarding machinery. The all-conquering Toyota Starlets were being challenged by newer space-framed Peugeot 205s coming out of Sonny Howard's SHP works. Skitmore was so equipped while the likes of Burgess and Jeff Simpson were still Starlet-mounted, as was Roger Peck.

There had been a good deal of hype surrounding Peck prior to the World Final, but he had gone off the boil a bit as the race approached. Many younger fans were undoubtedly still rooting for him and his flamboyant Union Jack Toyota; Peck himself was only 22. Northern Ireland still posed the biggest threat, notably from Norman Wolsey in his iconic Royal Mail-backed Peugeot.

Hot Laps left Peck back on the World Final's fifth row and looking out of it. But several daring passing moves carried him to fourth place with seemingly everyone in the stadium willing him on. When leader Burgess and challenger Skitmore tangled briefly, Peck dived up their outside and it was effectively all over. It would be the last World title taken in a Starlet.

Ready to rumble: BriSCA F1 grid

Dave Day was Banger World star

Norman Woolsey was unstoppable in the National Championship

Many of the majors retained a more familiar look however, with Woolsey lifting the Nationals and NHRPA, Simpson the European and Skitmore the English title.

Meanwhile, at the top of the contact racing tree, John Lund had been the form man coming into the BriSCA F1 World Championship at Hednesford. That was until a skirmish with a bumper-happy Kev Smith at the Skegness semi-final left Lund languishing in grid position 20 and, with Bert Finnikin (defending) and Peter Falding (the '86 winner) sharing the front row, now anything but favourite.

Finnikin led with Falding second. Lund was third after 10 laps although now, with his charge wilting, the win still looked unattainable. But when Falding rammed the leader in a desperate last-bend lunge and the pair hurtled towards the line still locked together in a cloud of rubber smoke, sending a backmarker rolling into the bargain, Lund calmly drove past all the mayhem to lift World title number three.

Away from the racing action, in May the NHRPA and IMP Group got together to form the ORC (Oval Racing Council), the organisation that today oversees the whole of UK oval racing.

Despite hosting the historic Howard Cole Memorial – where BriSCA F2 and Superstox shared an event for the first time since 'The Split' 30 years earlier – Wisbech Stadium was set to close at year's end. Despite running a 'last ever' meeting it did in fact limp on for another three seasons.

In F2's regular racing, Rob Speak, in only his second World Final, scored a runaway win at Bristol which started a run of dominance in which Speak would win every World Final bar one for the next nine years.

In the Superstox, Darren Innocent (who had lent his car to Derek Warwick for a one-off return to the formula at Wimbledon earlier in the year) took its main event at Venray in the Netherlands.

Elsewhere, Spedeworth's 1600 Hot Rods were gaining traction with Ormond Christie, Jeff Simpson and Ricky Hunn all taking licences, but it was Keith Rumary who lifted its World championship. Fellow Ulstermen Roy McKane and Wilson Hamilton took the top honours in Stock Rods and Super Rods respectively.

And while Bangers were still not exactly viewed as 'proper racing', by 1991 it had gone far from being the 'bit of fun' it had once been and was being taken very seriously indeed by promoters who sometimes found it beginning to attract bigger crowds than the elite formulas. While there were (and indeed, are) several World Championships, the Spedeworth (Dave Day at Wimbledon) and PRI (Steve Taylor at Arena Essex) events were still the most prestigious ones to win.

John Lund celebrates F1 win

"It was the last World title for a Starlet"

FLUX
16
BRIDGESTONE
HORIUCHI COLOR

PARTING SHOT

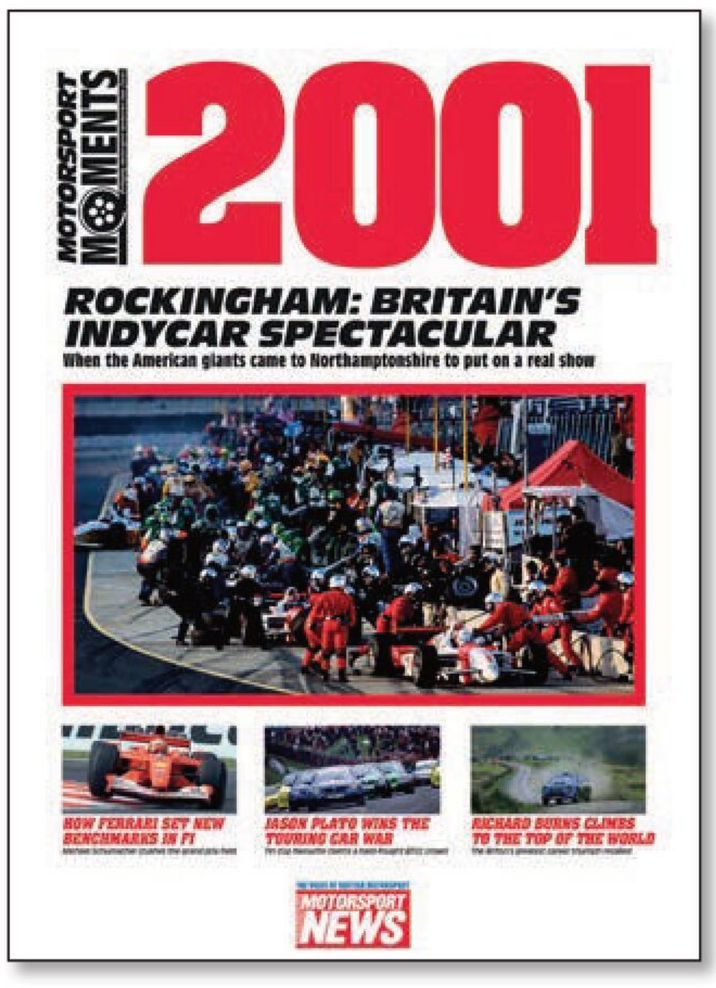
The dash for the big cash

Sixteen drivers were lucky enough to contest the three-race Jaguar Sport Intercontinental Challenge in 1991. The TWR built and prepared XJR-15s raced around the streets of Monaco, Silverstone and Spa. There was $1 million up for grabs for the winner. Derek Warwick was the winner at Monaco, while Juan Manuel Fangio II was at the ahead of the pack at Silverstone. Pictured here at Spa-Francorchamps, Ian Flux is on his way to an eighth-place finish in a race that was won by German Armin Hahne, who scooped the cash jackpot.

COMING SOON!

2001

In the fourth of our series of **Motorsport Moments** bookazines, we look back 20 years to the 2001 season. This was the year when IndyCars turned heads with a visit to the Rockingham Motor Speedway and Ferrari continued to dominate in Formula 1


MOTORSPORT MOMENTS
2001
ROCKINGHAM: BRITAIN'S INDYCAR SPECTACULAR
When the American giants came to Northamptonshire to put on a real show
HOW FERRARI SET NEW BENCHMARKS IN F1
JASON PLATO WINS THE TOURING CAR WAR
RICHARD BURNS CLIMBS TO THE TOP OF THE WORLD
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